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BY THE SAME AUTHOR AND TRANSLATOR

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THE NOTARY'S NOSE

THE MAN WITH THE BROKEN EAR

LEISURE HOUR SERIES

THE

NOTARY'S NOSE

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF

EDMOND ABOUT

BY

HENRY HOLT

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THIS TRANSLATION

IS

WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE OR CONSENT

DEDICATED

TO

EDWARD B. DICKINSON,

A STENOGRAPHER WHO NOT ONLY, BY HIS SKILL IN HIS ART, RELIEVED THE TRANSLATOR OF MUCH LABOR, BUT BY HIS AMIABLE DISPOSITION, GOOD TASTE, AND KNOWLEDGE OF MANY TONGUES, WENT BEYOND HIS MERE PROFESSIONAL DUTY TO FREQUENTLY OFFER THE RIGHT WORD WHEN THE TRANSLATOR HESITATED, AND TO SOMETIMES SUGGEST A BETTER WORD THAN THE TRANSLATOR HAD UTTERED.

CONTENTS.

THE NOTARY'S NOSE.

I.

THE EAST AND WEST AT WAR. BLOOD FLOWS.

MASTER[1] ALFRED L'AMBERT, before the fatal blow which obliged him to change his nose, was certainly the most brilliant notary in France. At that time, he was thirty-two years old; his figure was noble, his eyes large and well set, he had "the front of Jove himself," and beard and hair of the blond tint most approved. His nose (the noblest feature that ever bore the name) had the sweep of the eagle's beak. Yet, notwithstand-

ing perfections so eminently masculine, a white cravat became him admirably. Was it because he had worn one from his tenderest years, or because he knew the right shop? I suppose it was for both reasons together.

It is one thing to envelop one's neck in a pocket-handkerchief twisted into a rope, but it is a vastly different thing to concentrate the resources of art upon a perfect white cambric tie, with ends of equal length, starched in moderation and symmetrically pointing to the right and left. A white cravat, well selected and well tied, is by no means a graceless decoration; all the ladies will tell you so. But the mere getting it on right is not the whole thing; you must wear it right too: and that is a matter of experience. Why does a clod-hopper appear so awkward and utterly lost on his wedding-day? Simply because he has got himself tied up in a white

cravat, without preparing himself with preliminary study.

Now, a man can get used in no time to the most extraordinary head-gear,—a crown, for example. There was that soldier Bonaparte, who picked up one which a king of France had let drop in the *Place Louis XV.*, and got himself up in it without taking lessons of anybody; yet Europe declared that it was by no means unbecoming. He even after a while made crowns quite the fashion among his family and intimate friends. Everybody around him either wore one or wanted to. Yet that extraordinary man was but an indifferent hand at wearing a white tie.

There was *Monsieur le Vicomte de C———*, author of several prose poems, who had studied diplomacy, or the art of tying one's cravat, to some purpose. He was present at the review of our last army a few days before the Waterloo campaign.

What do you suppose stirred his soul at that heroic *fête*, where blazed forth the desperate enthusiasm of a great people? The fact that Bonaparte's tie did not set well.

Few men could contest the supremacy of this peaceful field with Master Alfred l'Ambert. I call him L'Ambert, not Lambert[2]; there is a decision of the *conseil d'Etat* on that question. Master l'Ambert succeeding his father, practised his profession of notary as a birthright. For two centuries and more, that glorious family had transmitted from father to son the office in the *Rue Verneuil*, and the very highest clientage in the *Faubourg Saint Germain*.

There was no way of telling what the practice was worth, as it had never been out of the family; but judging from the income of the five years preceding, it could not be called less than four hundred

thousand francs—that it to say, it netted, year in and year out, about twenty thousand dollars. For two centuries and more, the eldest sons had worn the white cravat of their office as naturally as crows wear black feathers, drunkards red noses, or poets seedy clothes. Legitimate heir of a name and fortune of no mean pretensions, little Alfred had sucked in sound principles with his milk. He duly detested all the novelties which had been introduced into French politics after the catastrophe of 1789. In his eyes, the French nation was made up of three classes: the clergy, the nobility, and the commonalty—a very respectable opinion, and held even now by a few senators. He modestly counted himself among the foremost of the commonalty; not, however, without some secret pretensions to the nobility conferred by the judicial robe. He held in loftiest scorn the bulk of the

French nation—that collection of peasants and mechanics which is called "the people," or "the common herd." He came in contact with them as little as possible, out of regard to his admirable person, which he loved and took care of with passionate fervor. Lithe, healthy, and vigorous as a pickerel, he was satisfied that "those people" were a sort of small fry, created by Providence expressly that they might nourish their high mightinesses the pickerel.

A charming fellow, nevertheless, like nearly all egoists; popular with the lawyers, at his club, among the notaries, at church and at the fencing-school, a good fencer, a good drinker, a generous lover so far as his heart was touched, a faithful friend to men in his own sphere, a most accommodating creditor, so far as he loaned out his income; refined in his tastes, exquisite in his dress, fresh as a

new coin, assiduous on Sunday at the ceremonies in the church of *St. Thomas d'Aquin*, and on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, at those in the green-room of the Opera,—he would have been the most perfect "gentleman"[3] of his time, in appearance and character, if he only had been free from a deplorable near-sightedness which condemned him to wear glasses. Is it necessary to add that his glasses were in gold frames—the finest, lightest, and most elegant that were ever made at the establishment of the celebrated Mathieu Luna, *quai des Orfèvres?*

He did not wear them always, but only at his office, or at a client's, when he had documents to read. You may well believe, that Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, when he entered the ballet green-room, he took particular care to unmask his fine eyes. No biconcave glass then veiled the brilliancy of his glance. He did not see

anything, I am perfectly satisfied, and sometimes bowed to a mere walking-lady, taking her for a star; but he had the resolute air of an Alexander entering Babylon. Moreover the little girls of the *corps de ballet*, who usually nicknamed people, had dubbed him "Conqueror." An amiable fat Turk, secretary to the embassy, had received the name "Tranquillity." A member of the council of State, was called "Melancholy;" the head secretary of the —— office, a man of quick and awkward gait, was called *M. Turlu.* That is why little Elise Champagne, also known as Champagne II., received the name of "*Turlurette*;" when she left the *coryphées* to raise herself to the rank of *sujet.*[4]

My country readers (if this veracious history should ever happen to pass beyond the fortifications of Paris) will deliberate a minute or two over the preceding paragraph. Even from here, I can hear a

thousand and one questions which they mentally address to the author. "What is the ballet green-room? And the *corps de ballet?* And the opera stars? And the *coryphées?* And the *sujets?* And walking-ladies? And government secretaries who stray into such a world, at the risk of fastening nicknames to themselves? And finally, how happens it that a man of established position and regular habits, a man of principle like Master Alfred l'Ambert should be, three times a week, in the ballet green-room. Ah! dear friends, it is precisely because he was a man of established position and regular habits—a man of principle. The ballet green-room was then a large square room, furnished with old red velvet sofas, and frequented by all the leading men of Paris. There you could meet not only with financiers, cabinet ministers and their secretaries, but even dukes, princes, deputies, prefects, and

senators most devoted to the temporal power of the Pope. There was even no lack of prelates. There you could see married ministers, and even the most completely married of all our ministers. When I say you could see them there, it is not because I have seen them myself. You will understand very well that poor devils of journalists could not get in there as if it were a mill. A cabinet minister holds the keys of that garden of the Hesperides in his own hands. No one can get in without his Excellency's permission. You should bear in mind, too, the rivalries, jealousies, and intrigues. How many cabinets have been overthrown on the most diverse pretexts, but at bottom because all the statesmen wanted to reign supreme in the ballet green-room. Don't think for a moment that such personages were drawn there by appetite for interdicted pleasures. They were burning with desire

to encourage one of the most aristocratic and politic of the arts.

The course of years has possibly changed all this; for Master l'Ambert's adventures were not of this week. Nevertheless they do not date back to the most hidden antiquity. But reasons of eminent propriety prevent me from naming the exact year when that officer of the civil service exchanged his aquiline nose for a straight one. That is the reason why I vaguely said "at that time," as story-tellers do. Suffice it to say that these events took place somewhere in the world's history, between the burning of Troy by the Greeks, and the burning of the summer palace at Pekin by the English army: two memorable halting-places in European civilization.

A contemporary and client of Master l'Ambert, the Marquis d'Ombremule, said one evening at the Café Anglais: "What distinguishes us from common men, is

our liking for the ballet. The common herd goes crazy over music; claps its hands over Rossini's operas, and Donizetti's, and Auber's. It would seem as if a million little notes, mixed up like a salad, have something about them to tickle the ears of such people. They carry the thing to the ridiculous extent of sometimes singing themselves, with their great rasping voices; and the police permit them to assemble in certain public halls, to murder some of the minor airs. Much good may it do them! As for me, I don't listen to an opera at all; I watch it; I go in time for the ballet, and after it I clear out. My worthy grandmother has told me that all the Court ladies of her time went to the opera for nothing but the ballet. They didn't refuse any encouragement to the dancing gentlemen. Now our time is come. It is our function to take care of the dancing ladies—"*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*"

There was the little Duchess de Biétry —young, pretty, and neglected; she was weak enough to find fault with the ways of conducting himself at the opera, which her husband had fallen into.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" she said to him, "to leave me alone in your box, with all your friends, while you run off the Lord knows where?"

"Madam," he answered, "where one is trying to get an embassy, oughtn't he to study politics?"

"Perhaps; but there are better schools in Paris, I fancy."

"None at all. Let me tell you, my dear child, that the ballet and politics are twins. To endeavor to please, by courting the public; to keep your eyes on the leader of the orchestra; to control your face; to change the color of your dress every moment; to hop from right to left, and from left to right; to spin round lightly;

to always land on your feet; to smile with your eyes full of tears; isn't that, in a few words, the programme of the ballet, and of politics?"

The duchess smiled, forgave him, and took a lover.

Great lords like the Duke de Biétry, statesmen like Baron de F——, great millionnaires, like little M. St. ——, and mere notaries like the hero of this story, elbowed each other, pell-mell, in the ballet green-room and side scenes of the stage. They were all equal before the ignorance and *naïveté* of those twenty-four little innocents, who compose the ballet. They are called the subscribers. They are smiled upon freely; they are prattled with in little corners; their bon-bons, and even their diamonds are accepted as a mere matter of politeness, not committing their receivers to anything.

The world is entirely wrong in fancying

that the opera is a market for easy pleasure, and a school for libertinage. More virtue can be found there than in any other theatre in Paris. And why? Because virtue brings a better price there than anywhere else.

Is it not interesting to make a close study of this little populace of young girls, almost all springing from very low origin, and able in no time to rise so high by talent or beauty? Fed upon dry bread and green apples in some workman's garret or porter's lodge, they come to the theatre in gingham and old shoes, and slip off furtively to dress themselves. Half an hour afterward, they come down to the green-room, radiant, sparkling, covered with silk and gauze and flowers, all at the expense of the state, and more brilliant than the fairies, angels, the houris of our dreams. Ministers and princes kiss their hands, and whiten their own dress coats

with the powder off the girls' arms. They babble into their ears all sorts of madrigals old and new, which sometimes are understood. Some of these girls have mother-wit, and talk well; these are soon carried away.

A tap of the bell calls the fairies to the stage. The crowd of subscribers follows them even to the beginning of the act, holds them back and engrosses them behind the side scenes. Brave subscriber, who risks the fall of the scenery, the spots of lamp oil, the greatest variety of stenches, for the pleasure of hearing a little voice, slightly hoarse, murmur these charming words:

"Jiminy! don't my feet hurt!"

The curtain rises, and the twenty-four queens of an hour joyously frisk under the lorgnettes of an enraptured public. There is not one of them who does not see, or think she sees among the audience,

two, three, ten adorers, known or unknown.

What a *fête* for the girls till the curtain falls! They are pretty, decked up, gazed after, admired, and have nothing to fear from criticisms or hisses. Midnight sounds; everything is changed as in the fairy tale. Cinderella starts with her mother or with her big sister, toward the cheap garrets of Batignolles or Montmartre. She limps a trifle, poor little one! and spatters her gray stockings. The good and wise mother of the family, who has placed all her hopes on the head of this child, repeats over again, on the way, a few lessons in wisdom.

"Keep the straight path in life, my daughter, and don't allow yourself to fall; or, if the fates absolutely decide that such misfortune shall reach you, be very careful to fall upon a rosewood bed!"

The counsels of experience are not

always followed. Sometimes the heart speaks. Sometimes the dancing girls are known to marry the dancing men. Sometimes little girls as pretty as Venus Anadyomene have been known to save a hundred thousand francs' worth of jewelry, that they might lead to the altar a clerk on two thousand a year. Others leave the care of their future to chance, and are the despair of their families. One concludes to wait until the tenth of April before disposing of her heart, because she has sworn to herself that she would keep steady until she should be seventeen. Another finds a protector to her taste, but does not dare to say so; she dreads the vengeance of a treasury auditor, who has vowed to kill her and himself, if she should love anybody else. He is joking, as you understand very well. But in this little world they take people's words in earnest. How *naïve* they are, and ignorant of

everything! Why even two great girls, sixteen years old, have been heard disputing over the nobility of their origin, and the rank of their families.

"Just look at that girl," said the larger; "her mother's ear-rings are silver, and my father's are gold."

Master Alfred l'Ambert, after long deliberating between brunette and blonde, had ended up by becoming enamored of a pretty brunette with blue eyes. Mademoiselle Victorine Tompain was a knowing creature, as they generally are at the opera, even on matters where they ought not to be; well brought up too, and incapable of making any important decision without consulting her parents. For about six months she had been pressed pretty closely by the handsome notary, and by Ayvaz-Bey, that fat Turk, twenty-five years old, who was known by the nickname of "Tranquillity." Both had had

some serious talks with her, in regard to her future. Respectable Madame Tompain held her daughter in a judicious middle course, waiting until one of the two rivals should decide to talk business with her.

The Turk was a good fellow, honest, staid, and timid. He spoke up, nevertheless, and was listened to.

Everybody learned this little secret in good time, except Master l'Ambert, who was off burying an uncle in Poitiers. When he got back to the opera, Mlle. Victorine Tompain had a diamond bracelet; diamond ear-rings, and a diamond heart like a chandelier hanging from her neck.

The Notary was near-sighted. I think I told you so at the outset. He did not see anything that he ought to have seen; least of all the wicked smiles which greeted his return. He floated about, chatted, and

shone as usual, impatiently waiting for the end of the ballet, and the appearance of the girls. His arrangements were made. The future of Mlle. Victorine was fixed, thanks to that excellent uncle in Poitiers, who had died just in the nick of time.

The place in Paris that they call the "*Passage de l'Opera,*" is crowded with galleries wide or narrow, light or dark, of various heights, which run along the boulevard, the *Rue Lepeletier*, the *Rue Drouot*, and the *Rue Rossini*. A long gallery, open most of the way, reaches from the *Rue Drouot* to the *Rue Lepeletier*, running across from the *Galerie du Baromètre* and the *Galerie de l'Hortoge*. At the lower end of it are a couple of steps from the *Rue Drouot* is the stage door of the theatre, the entrance used at night by the artists. Every midnight, a crowd of three or four hundred people rolls tumultuously under the eyes of Papa Monge, the con-

cierge of that paradise. Machinists, supers, walking-ladies, choristers, dancing girls and dancing men, tenors, sopranos, authors, musical composers, business managers, subscribers, all rushed out pell-mell. Some go down toward the *Rue Drouot;* others go up the staircase which leads through an open gallery to the *Rue Lepeletier.*

About the middle of this open passage, near the *Galerie du Baromètre,* Alfred l'Ambert was smoking a cigar and waiting. Ten paces farther on, a little fat man, in a scarlet fez, smoked with steady puffs a Turkish cigarette bigger than your little finger. Twenty other loungers, who had some business or other there, moved about, or looked around them, each one intent on his own business, without paying any attention to his neighbor. The singers passed along humming, and the male sylphs, getting along as easily as they

could, in old shoes, passed by, limping; and every minute or two a female shadow, shrouded in black, gray, or purple, slid along between the infrequent gas lights, unrecognizable to all eyes except the eyes of love.

Two would meet, join each other and start off, without saying any good-byes to the company. But stop! Suddenly there arises a strange noise, an unusual tumult. Two of these shadowy forms have passed; two men have run together; two lighted cigars have approached each other; people have heard noisy voices, as if there were some hasty quarrel. Promenaders have crowded together at one point. But they have not found anybody. Master Alfred l'Ambert goes down all alone toward his carriage, which was waiting for him on the boulevard. He shrugs his shoulders, and mechanically examines this card, spotted by a large drop of blood:

AYVAZ-BEY,

Secretaire de l'ambassade ottomane,

Rue de Grenelle, Saint-Germain, 100.

Listen to what he says between his teeth, this handsome notary of the *Rue de Verneuil;*

"A foolish affair! Devil take me if I knew that she had given any control over herself to that beast of a Turk! for it was certainly he. Why didn't I have my spectacles on? It looks as if I had struck him on the nose with my fist;—yes, his card is spotted, and so are my gloves. Here I am with a Turk on my hands, and all through my awkwardness! For I didn't have any ill-will toward the fellow; and the girl is of no consequence to me, after

all. He's got her, and I hope he'll take care of her. Two sensible fellows are not going to cut each others' throats for Mlle. Victorine Tompain; but that confounded blow—that spoils everything."

That is what he said between his teeth, his thirty-two teeth, whiter and sharper than those of a young wolf. He sent his coachman back home, and started off slowly on foot towards the *Cercle des Chemins de fer*. There he found two friends, and told them what had happened. The old Marquis de Villemaurin, an ex-captain of the royal guard; and young Henri Steimbourg, a stock-broker, both agreed that the blow spoiled everything.

CHAPTER II.

THE CAT CHASE.

A TURKISH philosopher has said: "There are no agreeable blows administered by the fist; but blows on the nose are the most disagreeable of all."

The same thinker justly adds, in the chapter immediately following: "To strike a man before the woman he loves, is to strike him twice; you wound the body and the soul."

That is why Ayvaz-Bey, who was a patient man, grew red with anger, while he took Mlle. Tompain and her mother to the apartment which he had furnished for them. He bade them good-bye at the door, jumped into a carriage, and drove,

bleeding all the while, to his colleague and friend, Ahmed.

Ahmed slept, under the guardianship of a faithful Afreet. Although it is written: "Thou shalt not wake thy sleeping friend," it is also written, "Wake him, nevertheless, if danger impends over him or thee." The good Ahmed was awakened. He was a tall Turk, about thirty-five years old, thin and lank, with long bow-legs; an excellent fellow withal, and a man of sense.

There is something good among these people, whatever you may say. As soon as he saw the bloody face of his friend, he forthwith brought him a great basin of fresh water. For it is written, "Take no thought before washing off thy blood; thy thoughts would be troubled and impure."

Ayvaz was washed off a good deal sooner than he was calmed. He told his story in a rage. The Afreet, who found himself in the position of a third party to

the conversation, offered to take his scimitar, and go and kill M. l'Ambert.

Ahmed-Bey thanked him for his good disposition, and kicked him out of the room.

"And now," said he to the good Ayvaz, "what shall we do?"

"That's simple enough," replied the other. "I'll cut his nose off to-morrow morning. The *lex talionis* is written in the Koran: 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a nose for a nose.'"

Ahmed remonstrated that though the Koran was certainly a good book, it had grown a little out of date. Maxims on points of honor had changed some since Mahomet. Moreover, on the ground that the law should be applied to the very letter, Ayvaz would have to strike M. l'Ambert on the nose with his fist.

"What right have you got to cut off his nose, since he has not cut off yours?"

But does a young man who has had his nose mashed in the presence of his mistress ever listen to reason? Ayvaz wanted blood, and Ahmed had to promise it.

"It's all very well," said he; "we represent our country in a strange land; we ought not to receive an affront without proving our courage. But how can you fight a duel with M. l'Ambert according to the rules of this country? you know nothing of the small sword."

"What have I got to do with the small sword? I want to cut his nose off, I tell you; and a small sword wouldn't be of any use in what I'm after."

"If you only were anything of a hand with a pistol—"

"Are you crazy? what do I want with a pistol, to cut the nose off an impudent puppy? I—yes—the thing is fixed; go and find him and arrange everything for to-morrow; we will fight with sabres."

"But, my dear fellow, what will you do with a sabre? I don't doubt your courage; but I must say, without meaning to offend you, that you are not quite as skilful as Pons."

"What difference does that make? get up, and go tell him to hold his nose subject to my orders to-morrow morning."

Ahmed was a sensible fellow, and understood that logic would be entirely out of place, and that he was reasoning against the wind. What would be the use in preaching to a deaf man who held on to his idea like the Pope to the temporal power? So he dressed himself, took along his first dragoman Osman-Bey, who had just gotten in from the Imperial Club, and drove to Master l'Ambert's. The time was perfectly unseasonable; but Ayvaz would not stand the loss of a single moment. No more would the god of battles; at least everything leads me to think so.

At the very moment when the first secretary was about to ring Master l'Ambert's bell, he met the enemy in person, who was returning on foot, talking with his two friends. M. l'Ambert saw the red fezes, took in the situation, bowed, and opened the conversation with a certain dignity which was by no means devoid of grace.

"Gentlemen," said he to the new arrivals, "as I am the only occupant of this house, I presume I am correct in supposing that the honor of this visit is intended for me? I am M. l'Ambert; permit me to show you in."

He rung, pushed the door open, went across the court with his four nocturnal visitors, and conducted them into his office. There the two Turks gave him their names, the Notary presented his two friends to them, and left the parties face to face.

A duel cannot take place in France

without the desire, or at least consent, of six persons. Now there were five who did not desire this one at all. Master l'Ambert was a brave man; but he could not deny to himself that a disturbance of this kind, on account of a little danseuse at the opera, would seriously injure his practice. The Marquis de Villemaurin, an old gentleman cultivated up to the highest point in affairs of honor, declared that the duel was a noble game, where everything, from the beginning of the match to the end, ought to be in strict order. Now a blow on the nose for Mlle. Victorine Tompain was the most ridiculous opening of the game that could be imagined. He declared, moreover, upon his honor, that M. Alfred l'Ambert had not seen Ayvaz-Bey, and that he did not want to strike him, or anybody else. M. l'Ambert had thought he recognized two ladies, and had hastily stepped up to speak to them. In carrying

his hand to his hat, he had violently and unintentionally struck a person who was running up from an opposite direction. It was a pure accident; an awkwardness at the most. People are not supposed to be called upon to account for accidents or even awkwardness. The rank and education of M. l'Ambert would not let anybody suppose that he was capable of striking Ayvaz-Bey with his fist. His notorious near-sightedness, and the darkness of the passage had done the damage. Finally, M. l'Ambert, with the advice of his friends, was entirely ready to say in the presence of Ayvaz-Bey, that he regretted having accidentally hurt him.

This way of putting it sounded well enough in itself, and received a sort of additional authority from the character of the speaker. M. de Villemaurin was one of those gentlemen who seem to have been

forgotten by Death for the sake of recalling historic times to our degenerate age. The record of his birth did not allow him more than seventy-nine years, but in his habits and sympathies he belonged to the sixteenth century. He thought, spoke, and acted as a man who had served in the Army of the League, and put the Béarnais to flight; a royalist from conviction, an austere Catholic, he brought to his hates and to his friendships a warmth which exaggerated everything. His courage, his loyalty, his rectitude, and even, to a certain degree, his eccentric chivalrousness, made him a model for the admiration of the inconsistent youth of to-day. He never laughed, was slow to take a joke, and felt injured by a *bon-mot*, as if it indicated a lack of respect. He was the least tolerant, the least lovable, and the most honorable old gentleman in the world. He had accompanied Charles X. to Scot-

land, after the fatal days of July, but he left Holyrood after being there about a fortnight, scandalized to see that the Court of France did not take misfortune in earnest. He forthwith sent in his resignation, and cut off his mustache forever. This he preserved in a sort of casket with this inscription: "*Mes moustaches de la Garde Royale.*" His subordinates, officers and soldiers, held him in great esteem and in great terror. It was whispered that this inflexible man had imprisoned his only son, a young soldier of twenty-two, for an act of insubordination. The boy, worthy son of such a father, obstinately refused to yield, fell sick in prison, and died. Our Brutus bewailed his son, built a suitable tomb for him, and visited it regularly twice a week, without forgetting this duty in any weather, or at any time. But he did not bend under the burden of his remorse: he walked erect,

with a certain rigidity; neither age nor grief had rounded his broad shoulders.

He was a stubby little man, vigorous, and still addicted to the exercises of his youth. He relied more on playing tennis than on medicine, for preserving his vigorous health. At sixty, he had married a second time, his wife being a young girl, noble and poor. He had two children by her, and did not despair of soon becoming a grandfather. The love of life, so powerful in men of his age, had very moderate hold on him, although he was happy enough here below. He had had his last duel, when he was sixty-two, with a handsome six-foot colonel,—some say on account of politics, others say conjugal jealousy. When a man of such rank and character undertook to act and speak in behalf of M. l'Ambert, when he declared that a duel between the notary and Ayvaz-Bey would be useless, compromising,

and vulgar, peace seemed signed in advance.

Such was the opinion of M. Henri Steimbourg, who was neither young enough nor curious enough to want to see a duel at any price; and the two Turks, like sensible men, at once accepted the reparation which was offered. They nevertheless asked to confer with Ayvaz; and while they ran to the Embassy, the enemy awaited them on the spot. It was four o'clock in the morning; but not even a clear conscience could give the marquis sleep. As long as anything was left to be settled, he could not go to bed.

But the terrible Ayvaz, at the first words which his friends uttered regarding a reconciliation, got into a regular Turkish rage. "Am I a fool?" he cried, brandishing the jessamine chibouk which had kept him company; "are you trying to persuade me that I gave myself the blow

against M. l'Ambert's fist? He struck me, and the proof is that he offers to apologize. But what's the use of words when blood is spilt? Can I forget that Victorine and her mother were witnesses to my shame? O my friends, there is nothing left for me to do but die, if I cannot cut the rascal's nose off to-day!"

Nolens volens, their negotiations had to be renewed on this somewhat ridiculous basis. Ahmed and the dragoman had minds reasonable enough to blame their friend, but hearts too generous to leave him in the lurch. If the ambassador Hamza-Pacha had happened to be in Paris, he would have undoubtedly stopped the affair by some stroke of authority; but unfortunately he held the two embassies of France and England, and was in London. The good Ayvaz' friends flew like shuttles between the *Rue de Grenelle* and the *Rue de Verneuil* until seven o'clock in the morning,

without getting things on perceptibly. At seven o'clock, M. l'Ambert lost patience, and said to his seconds : " This Turk bores me. He is not satisfied with getting little Tompain away from me, but the gentleman finds it to his pleasure to make me pass a sleepless night. Very well, let us go ahead ; he may end by thinking that I'm afraid to meet him. But now push things through, if you please ; try and finish up the matter this morning. I will have my horses hitched in ten minutes ; we will go a couple of leagues outside Paris. I will bring my Turk to his senses in a jiffy, and get back to the office before the little newspapers that delight in scandal can get wind of our affair."

The Marquis still tried one or two objections ; but he ended by owning that M. l'Ambert was forced into it. Ayvaz-Bey's stubbornness was in the worst kind of taste, and deserved a severe lesson. Nobody

could doubt that the bellicose notary, so favorably known in the fencing-schools, was the professor chosen by Destiny to indoctrinate French politeness into this child of Islam.

"My dear boy," said old Villemaurin, clapping his man on the shoulder, "our position is excellent, for we have right on our side; leave the rest to God. The result is not at all doubtful; you have a firm heart and a quick hand. Always remember, though, that one ought not to lunge deeply; for the duel is made to correct fools, not to destroy them. Nobody but a gawky would kill his man on the pretext of teaching him how to live."

The choice of arms fell by lot to our amiable Ayvaz. But the notary and his seconds winced a little upon learning that he selected sabres.

"That is the weapon of soldiers," said the Marquis, "or of vulgar fellows who

don't want to fight. Nevertheless the sabre let it be, if you stick to it."

Ayvaz-Bey's second said that they were very decided about it. Then they went to seek a couple of broadswords, or short swords, at the shop on the *Quai d'Orsay*, and they agreed to meet at ten o'clock at the little village of Parthenay, on the old road to Sceaux. When they separated, it was half-past eight.

Everybody in Paris knows that pretty collection of about two hundred houses whose inhabitants are richer, better behaved, and better educated than most of our villagers. They till the soil as gardeners, and not as laborers; and through the whole spring their lands are a paradise on earth. A field of strawberry blossoms spreads out like cloth of silver between a field of currants and one of raspberries; whole acres exhale the perfume of the black currant, delightful to the nose of the concierge.

Paris buys the harvest of Parthenay with beautiful *louis d'or*, and the sturdy peasants whom you see trudging along slowly, a watering-pot in each hand, are little capitalists.

They eat meat twice a day, scorn boiled hen, and prefer roasted capon. They pay the salaries of a schoolmaster and a doctor employed for the general good. They have built a house for the mayor, and a church, without running into debt, and vote for my ingenious friend, Dr. Véron in the elections for the *Corps Legislatif*. Their girls are pretty, if my memory serves me rightly. The learned archæologist Cubaudet, recorder of the sub-prefecture of Sceaux, declares that Parthenay is a Greek colony, and that it gets its name from the word *Parthénos*, a virgin or young girl (it is all one among people of high civilization). But this discussion would lead us away from our good Ayvaz.

He reached the rendezvous first, still raging. How proudly he paced the village square, while waiting for the enemy! Under his mantle, he hid two formidable yataghans, excellent Damascus blades. What did I say? Damascus? Two Japanese blades; those that cut a bar of iron as readily as a sprout of asparagus, if they are swung by a good arm. Ahmed-Bey and the faithful dragoman followed their friend, and gave him the wisest counsels: to attack cautiously, to expose himself the least possible, to leap back instantly when disposed to take a second's breathing-space—in a word, everything that could be said to a novice going into the field without knowing what he has got to do.

"Thanks for your hints," answered the obstinate fellow; "there's no need of so much ceremony in cutting the nose off a notary."

The object of his vengeance soon ap-

peared, between two spectacle-glasses, at the window of the Notary's carriage. But M. l'Ambert did not alight; he contented himself with bowing. The Marquis got out, and went to speak to the tall Ahmed-Bey.

"I know an excellent spot, about twenty minutes from here; be so good as to get into your carriage again with your friends, and follow me."

The belligerents took a cross-road, and got out about half a mile from the houses.

"Gentlemen," said the Marquis, "we can reach the little wood you see yonder, on foot; the coachmen will wait for us here. We have forgotten to bring a surgeon; but the footman whom I left at Parthenay will bring the village doctor."

The Turks' coachman was one of those Parisian marauders who go about after midnight under counterfeit numbers. Ayvaz had picked him up at Mlle. Tom-

pain's door, and had held on to him even to Parthenay. The old bummer smiled slightly when he found that they stopped him in the open country, and that they had sabres under their cloaks.

"Good luck to you, boss," said he to our brave Ayvaz. "Oh, you don't run any risk; I always brings luck to the gents I carries; why, only last year I brought out one who dropped his man. He gave me twenty-five francs drink-money. It's true, just as I tell you."

"You shall have fifty," said Ayvaz, "if God grants me the vengeance I seek."

M. l'Ambert was an admirable fencer, and too well known in the schools to have ever had occasion to fight. So, in an actual duel, he was as inexperienced as Ayvaz-Bey. Therefore, although he had beaten his drill masters and marshals of several cavalry regiments in fencing, he felt a sort of dull trepidation which had no

fear about it, but which nevertheless produced just the same effects. In the carriage, his conversation had been brilliant. With his seconds he had displayed a gayety perfectly spontaneous, but nevertheless a little feverish. He had burned three or four cigars on the way, under pretence of smoking them. When they all got out, he walked with a firm step—a little too firm, perhaps. At the bottom of his soul, he was the victim of some apprehension, but it was entirely manly and entirely French; he distrusted his nervous system, and feared that he would not appear as brave as he was.

It would seem as if the powers of the soul are doubled in the critical moments of life. And so, although M. l'Ambert was certainly interested in the little drama in which he was to play a part, the most insignificant objects of the outer world, those which ordinarily would have at-

tracted his attention the least, now riveted it with irresistible power. To his eyes, nature was illumined with a new light, clearer, more penetrating, fuller than the usual light of the sun. His preoccupation emphasized, so to say, everything that fell under his eyes. At a turn of the path he noticed a cat moving stealthily between two rows of currant-bushes. It was such a cat as one sees a great many of in villages—a long, thin cat, with a whitish skin, spotted in dusty brown; one of those half-savage animals whose masters feed them liberally with all the mice they are smart enough to catch. This one had undoubtedly found that the house where it lived did not sufficiently abound in game, and was endeavoring to eke out his pittance in the open field. M. l'Ambert's eyes, after casually wandering toward him several times, felt attracted and, as it were, fascinated by the aspect of that cat. He watched

him attentively, admired the suppleness of his muscles, the vigorous outline of his jaws, and thought he had made a discovery in natural history when he observed that the cat is a miniature tiger.

"What the deuce are you looking at there?" asked the Marquis, clapping him on the shoulder.

He came to himself at once, and answered in the easiest manner:

"That dirty beast was attracting my attention. You would hardly believe, M. le Marquis, the bother that those rascals give us in hunting. They eat more coveys of partridges than we shoot. If I had a gun—" and joining the action to the word he took aim at the animal with his finger. The cat seemed to understand the motion, jumped back and disappeared.

He appeared again a couple of hundred paces farther off, and dressed his whiskers in the midst of a cabbage

patch, while seeming to wait for the Parisians.

"Are you following us?" called out the notary, repeating his threatening gesture.

The over-prudent beast took to flight again, but reappeared at the edge of the clearing where they were going to fight.

M. l'Ambert, superstitious as a gambler about to make a heavy bet, wanted to chase away this malevolent fetish; he threw a pebble at him without hitting him, and the cat climbed a tree and kept still.

The seconds had already selected a spot and drawn lots for places. The better fell to M. l'Ambert; and the lot also decreed that they should use the weapons he had brought, and not the Japanese yataghans, which would have been awkward for him.

Nothing appeared awkward for Ayvas; to him every sabre was a good sabre. He watched his enemy's nose as a fisher-

man watches a handsome trout dangling at the end of his line. He rapidly pulled off all clothes which were not absolutely indispensable, threw his red fez and green coat on the grass, and rolled his shirt-sleeves up to the elbow. It must be admitted that the sleepiest Turks wake up at the clash of arms. This big boy, whose face showed him every inch a Turk, appeared transfigured. His face seemed to glow, his eyes shot flames. He took a sabre from the Marquis' hand, stepped back two paces, and intoned in Turkish a poetical improvization which his friend Osman-Bey has had the kindness to preserve and translate for us:

"I am armed for the combat; woe to the giaour who insults me! The price of blood is blood. Thou hast smitten me with the hand; I, Ayvaz, son of Ruchti, will smite thee with the sword. Thy mutilated face shall make lovely woman laugh.

Schlosser and Mercier, Thibert and Savile, shall turn from thee in scorn. The perfume of the roses of Izmar shall be lost to thee. May Mahomet give me strength! I ask courage from no one. Hurrah! I am armed for the combat."

He spoke, and threw himself upon his adversary. He attacked him *en tierce*, or *en quarte*, I don't know which; neither does he, nor the seconds, nor M. l'Ambert. But a jet of blood spurted at the end of his sabre, a pair of spectacles glistened on the ground, and the notary felt his head lighter in front by the whole weight of his nose. A little of it was left, but so little that I only mention it for the sake of accuracy.

M. l'Ambert recoiled backwards, but soon recovered himself, and ran about, with his head hanging down like a blind man or a crazy one. At the same moment, a dark body fell from the branch of an oak.

A minute later, they noticed the approach of a little thin man, hat in hand, followed by a tall servant in livery. This was M. Triquet, health officer of the parish of Parthenay.

All hail to thee, worthy M. Triquet! A brilliant Paris notary is in great need of thy services. Put thy old hat on thy bald head; rub off the drops of sweat glistening on thy red cheeks like dew on a full-blown peony, and roll back as soon as thou canst the glossy sleeves of thy respectable black coat!

But the worthy man was too much excited to set to work at once. He talked, talked, talked, with a thin, piping little voice.

"Bless my soul!" said he; "my respects to you; I am your very humble servant. Does Jesus permit people to get themselves in such a condition? It is a mutilation; I see what it is! Decidedly it is

too late to bring conciliatory words here; the harm is done. Ah! gentlemen, gentlemen, youth will be always young. As for me, I don't permit myself to be led into destroying or mutilating my kind. It was in 1820; what did I do, gentlemen? I made apologies; yes, apologies. And I honor myself for it; especially as right was on my side. You have never read Rousseau's beautiful pages against duel ling; it is absolutely irrefutable; it is a literary and moral chrestomathy. And even Rousseau has not said all that could be said. If he had studied the human body, that masterpiece of creation, that admirable image of God on earth, he would have demonstrated to you that it is most culpable to destroy so perfect a combination. I don't say this against the person who gave the blow; God forbid! He undoubtedly had his reasons, which I respect. But if he had only known how

much trouble it gives us poor doctors to cure the slightest wound. It is true we live by them, and by sickness; but what difference does that make? I would rather deprive myself of everything and live on a piece of sour lard, spread over brown bread, than to witness the sufferings of my fellow-creatures."

The Marquis interrupted this bewailing:

"Very well, doctor; we're not here to philosophize; here's a man bleeding like an ox; and the thing to do is to stop the hemorrhage."

"Yes, sir," he answered quickly; "the hemorrhage: that is the proper word. Fortunately I have provided for everything; here is a phial of styptic fluid. It is Brocchieri's preparation; I prefer it to Léchelle's prescription."

He started, phial in hand, toward M. l'Ambert, who was seated at the foot of a tree, and bleeding piteously.

"Monsieur," he said, with a profound obeisance, "I beg you to believe that I sincerely regret not having had the honor of making your acquaintance under circumstances less deplorable."

M. l'Ambert raised his head, and said in a doleful voice:

"Doctor, shall I lose my nose?"

"No, Monsieur, you will not lose it. Alas! you no longer have it to lose, my dear sir; you have lost it already."

While speaking, he turned the Brocchieri water on a compress.

"Heavens!" cried he, "Monsieur, I have an idea; I can restore you that useful and agreeable organ which you have lost."

"What do you say? The devil! My fortune is yours. Ah! Doctor, rather than live disfigured, I would die."

"Yes; so people talk. But let us see: where is the piece they cut off? I am not a champion of the ability of M. Vel-

peau or of M. Huguier. But I would undertake to patch up things as they were originally."

M. l'Ambert got up precipitately and ran to the field of battle. The Marquis and M. Steimbourg followed him. The Turks, who were walking together, moodily enough (for Ayvas' fire had been quenched in a second), joined their late enemies. They easily found the place where the combatants had trodden down the new grass. They found the gold spectacles, but the notary's nose was no longer there. But they saw a cat, a horrible white and yellow cat, who was licking his bloody chops with gusto.

"Great Heavens!" cried the Marquis, pointing to the beast.

Everybody understood the gesture and exclamation.

"Can there be time yet?" asked the notary.

"Possibly," said the doctor.

Then they ran; but the cat was not in the humor of being caught, and he ran too.

Never had the little wood of Parthenay seen, and certainly never will it again see, such a chase. A marquis, a broker, three diplomats, a village doctor, a footman in gorgeous livery, and a notary, bleeding in his handkerchief, launched desperately in pursuit of an emaciated cat. Running, shouting, throwing stones, dead branches, everything which came to hand, they went over roads and clearings, dashing with their heads down into the closest thickets. Sometimes together, sometimes scattered, sometimes drawn out in echelon, sometimes ranged in a semi-circle around the enemy; beating the bushes, shaking the shrubbery, climbing trees, tearing their gaiters against stumps, and their clothes against bushes, they rushed on like a tempest. But the infernal cat was swifter than

the wind. Twice they thought they could surround him. Twice he forced the circle and took to the field. One moment he seemed to be conquered by fatigue or despair. He had fallen on his side, trying to jump from one tree to another, as squirrels do. M. l'Ambert's valet ran for him from the farther end of the crowd. He reached him in a few strides, and seized him by the tail; but the miniature tiger conquered his liberty by a blow of his paw, and escaped into the woods again.

They followed him to the plain; long, long was the road already traversed; immense was the plain which spread out like a chess-board before the hunters and their prey.

The heat of the day was oppressive; great black clouds were piled up in the west; the sweat rolled down all their faces; but nothing could quench the eagerness of these eight devoted men.

M. l'Ambert, all covered with blood, spurred on his companions by word and deed. People who have never seen a notary chasing his nose, cannot have a just idea of his ardor. Good-by strawberries and raspberries, farewell gooseberries and currants. Everywhere the avalanche had passed, the hope of the harvest was crushed, destroyed, annihilated. There was nothing left but bruised flowers, torn buds, broken branches, and stalks trampled under foot. The villagers, surprised by the invasion of this unknown torrent, threw down their watering-pots, called their neighbors, cried out to the police, yelled for pay for the damage, and gave chase to the chasers.

Victory! The cat is a prisoner. He has thrown himself down a well. Buckets! ropes! ladders! They are sure that Master l'Ambert's nose will be found intact, or nearly so. But alas! this well is not as other wells. It is the opening of

an abandoned quarry whose galleries form a veritable net-work of more than ten leagues, and are connected with the catacombs of Paris!

M. Triquet's fees are paid. All the villagers are paid the indemnities which they claim; and in a heavy rain, they start back towards Parthenay.

Before getting into his carriage, Ayvaz-Bey, wet as a duck, and entirely cooled down, offered his hand to M. l'Ambert.

"Monsieur," said he, "I sincerely regret that my obstinacy has pushed things so far. Little Tompain is not worth a single drop of the blood which has been shed for her. I shall give her her dismissal this very day, for I could never see her again without thinking of the unhappiness she has caused. You have yourself seen that I have done my best, as have these gentlemen, to restore you what you have lost. Nevertheless, permit me still to hope that

this accident will not prove irreparable. The village doctor told us that in Paris there are practitioners more skilful than he. I think I have heard that modern surgery has infallible secrets for restoring parts mutilated or destroyed."

M. l'Ambert, with bad enough grace, accepted the faithful hand which was offered him, and with his two friends started back for the Faubourg Saint Germain.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH THE NOTARY TAKES CARE OF HIS SKIN MORE SUCCESSFULLY.

An unqualifiedly happy man was the coachman of Ayvaz-Bey. That veteran Paris *gamin* probably took less delight in the fifty francs drink-money than in the pleasure of having led his patron to victory.

"Beg pardon, your honor," said he to our good Ayvaz; "how you does polish people off! It's really worth knowing about. If ever I treads on your toes, I makes my manners in short order. That poor gent wouldn't find it very handy to take a pinch of snuff now. Well, well, if anybody ever tells me as Turks is scrubs, I'll have something to answer back. I

brought you good luck, as I said I would. Well, my prince, I know an old chap, from near Brion, who's different every way from me. He brings bad luck to folks as he carries. Just as many as he puts into the field, just so many gets done-up. G'lang old gal! Let's go to glory! the horses on the *Carrousel* can't make out as they're cousins of yours to-day!"

These rather cruel witticisms could not cheer up the three Turks. The cabman amused nobody but himself.

In a carriage infinitely better in its appointments and horses, the notary bewailed himself before his friends.

"It's all up with me," he said; "I'm about as good as a dead man; there's nothing left for me to do but blow my brains out. It will not do for me to go into society any more; nor to the opera, nor to any of the theatres. You would not have me display to the eyes of the uni-

verse a grotesque and pitable figure which would excite laughter in some, and pity in others."

"Bah!" answered the Marquis; "the world gets used to everything; and, at the very worst, if you're afraid of the world, you can stay at home."

"Stay at home! a fine prospect! Do you believe, then, that the women would come to pay court to me at home in the beautiful condition in which I am?"

"You'll get married! I knew a lieutenant of cuirassiers who had lost an arm, a leg, and an eye. He was not exactly a pet of the petticoats, but he married a nice girl, neither ugly nor pretty, who loved him with all her heart, and made him perfectly happy."

M. l'Ambert undoubtedly found this prospect not the most consoling in the world, for he cried out in a voice of despair:

"O women! women! women!"

"Bless me!" said the Marquis, "how your compass does turn toward the women. Women are not everything; there's something else in the world. Why the devil shouldn't a man work out his salvation? He can enlarge his soul, cultivate his mind, help his fellow-creatures, and discharge the duties of his position. It's not necessary to have a nose of any given length to be a good Christian, a good citizen, and a good notary."

"Notary!" answered the victim, with ill-concealed bitterness. "Yes; I'm still that. Yesterday I was a man; a man of the world; a gentleman; and even (I may as well say it without any false modesty) reasonably popular among the ladies of the best society. To-day I'm nothing but a notary; and who knows that I shall be even that to-morrow? It only requires an indiscretion in my valet to noise

about this foolish affair. Why, if a newspaper were to say two words about it, the authorities would be obliged to prosecute my adversary, and his seconds, and yourselves, gentlemen. Just imagine us in a police court, recounting to the tribunal where and why I followed Mlle. Victorine Tompain. Fancy such a scandal, and tell me if my notaryship would survive it?"

"My dear boy," answered the Marquis, "you scare yourself over imaginary dangers. People of our degree, and you are one to some extent, have the right to cut each other's throats with impunity. The authorities shut their eyes to our quarrels —and that is justice. I understand that they bother journalists a little, and artists, and other individuals of inferior condition, when they venture to touch a sword. It's just as well to remind such people that they have fists to pound each other with,

and that such weapons are good enough to avenge the kind of honor which they possess. But when a gentleman acts as a gentleman, the authorities have nothing to say, and they say nothing. I have had fifteen or twenty such affairs, since I left the service; and some of them turned out rather badly for my adversaries. Have you ever seen my name in the Police Gazette?"

M. Steimbourg was less intimate with M. l'Ambert than the Marquis de Villemaurin was. He had not, like the Marquis, had all his title-deeds in the office in the Rue de Verneuil for four or five generations; he did not even know the two other gentlemen, except at the club, and at whist-parties, possibly, too, through some commissions which the notary had thrown in his way. But he was a good fellow, and a man of sense; and he indulged, in his turn, in a considerable ex-

penditure of words, reasoning with and consoling his unhappy friend.

As was natural to him, the Marquis de Villemaurin had put the worst face on matters. There was still something left to fall back upon. To say that M. l'Ambert, had got to remain disfigured his whole life was to put too little confidence in science.

"What would be the use of being born in the nineteenth century, if the least accident could become, as in old times, an irreparable misfortune? Where would be our superiority over the people of the golden age? Do not let us blaspheme against the sacred name of Progress. Operative surgery, thank God! is more flourishing than ever in the land of Ambroise Paré. That old fellow, back at Parthenay, named several skilful men who patch up the human body successfully. Here we are at the gates of Paris. We'll send to the nearest drug-store, where

they will give us the address of Velpeau, or Huguier; your footman will run for the great man and bring him to your house. I'm sure I've heard that surgeons replace a lip, an eyelid, and even an ear. Is it more difficult, then, to restore the tip of the nose?"

This hope was rather vague. Nevertheless it encouraged the poor notary, who had not been bleeding for half an hour; and the idea of becoming what he was before, and taking up his old course of life, threw him into a sort of ecstasy. So true is it that we never realize the fulness of happiness until we have lost it.

"Ah, my friends," he cried, kneading his hands into each other, "my fortune belongs to the man who will cure me. No matter what torments I must undergo, I will pour out money with all my heart, if I can be certain of success; and I will no more spare suffering than expense."

In this frame of mind he got back to the Reu de Verneuil; while his footman had gone to get some addresses of celebrated surgeons. The Marquis and M. Steimbourg conducted him to his chamber and took their leave, one to go and relieve the anxiety of his wife and daughters, whom he had not seen since the preceding evening, the other to hasten to the Bourse.

Left alone, beside the great Venetian glass which pitilessly reflected his new aspect, Alfred l'Ambert fell into a profound melancholy. This strong man, who never wept at the theatre, because it is vulgar; this gentleman with a face of bronze, who had buried his father and mother with the most serene composure, wept over the mutilation of his handsome person, and bathed himself in selfish tears.

His footman diverted him from this bitter grief, by promising a call from M.

Bernier, surgeon of the *Hotel Dieu*,[5] member of the Surgical Society, and of the Academy of Medicine, clinical professor, etc., etc., etc. The servant had run to the nearest surgeon, in the Rue de Bac, and he did not happen on a bad one. M. Bernier, if he was not quite the peer of Velpeau, Manec, and Huguier, occupied a very honorable rank immediately below them.

"Why don't he come?" cried M. l'Ambert; "why isn't he here now? Does he think I'm to be kept waiting?"

And he began weeping harder than ever; weeping before his servants. Can a mere sabre-stroke so change a man's ways? Certainly it would seem that the weapon of our good Ayvaz in transversing the nasal canal must have quite laid open the lachrymal duct and the glands themselves.

The notary dried his eyes and examined

a huge volume which had been brought him in great haste from M. Steimbourg. It was Ringuet's "*Chirurgie operatoire*,"[6] an excellent manual, and embellished with about three hundred engravings. M. Steimbourg had bought the book on his way to the Bourse, and sent it to his friend, undoubtedly with a view to encouraging him. But the effect of reading it was entirely different from what he had hoped. When the notary had run over a couple of hundred pages, when he had seen defile before his eyes a lamentable series of ligatures, amputations, resections, and cauterizations, he dropped the book, and threw himself on the sofa with closed eyes. Though his eyes were shut, he continued to see skin laid open, muscles held aside by hooks, limbs cut into by great strokes of the knife, and bones sawed by the hands of invisible operators. The patients' faces seemed, as they always do in

anatomical designs, calm, stoical, and indifferent to suffering. And he asked himself if such a degree of courage could ever have found place in the human soul. Oftener than anything else, his fancy pictured a little surgeon on page 89, dressed entirely in black, with a velvet collar on his coat. This fantastic creature, with a round head, rather vigorous aspect, bald forehead, and serious face, was intently sawing away at the two lower leg bones of a living man.

"Monster!" cried M. l'Ambert.

At the same instant he beheld the monster enter in person, and M. Bernier was announced. The notary fled backwards to the darkest corner of his room, staring with haggard eyes, and holding his hands out before him as if to keep off an enemy; his teeth chattered, and he murmured in a smothered voice, just as they do in the romances of M. Xavier de Montepin, the words:

"'Tis he! 'Tis he! 'Tis he!"

"Monsieur," said the doctor, "I regret having made you wait, and I beg you to compose yourself. I understand the accident which has befallen you, and I don't believe that the misfortune is irremediable. But we can do no good if you are afraid of me."

Fear is a suggestion which sounds disagreeably to French ears. M. l'Ambert straightened himself up, marched directly to the doctor, and said to him with a little laugh, rather too nervous to be natural:

"*Parbleu!* doctor, you're joking with me; do I look like a man who is subject to fear? If I were a coward I would not have had myself abbreviated this morning in such a strange fashion. But while I was waiting for you, I looked over a book of surgery; my eye had just lit on a figure which resembles you; you came upon

me like a ghost. Add to the surprise, this morning's emotions, and possibly, too, a slight touch of fever, and you can excuse anything strange there may have been in my welcome."

"All right," said M. Bernier, taking up the book. "Ah! you were reading Ringuet. He's one of my friends. I remember, in fact, that he had me engraved to the life, from a sketch by Léveillé; but sit down, I beg of you."

The notary recovered himself a little, and recounted the occurrences of the day, without forgetting the episode of the cat who had made him, as it were, lose his nose a second time.

"That is a misfortune," said the surgeon, "but we can remedy it in a month. As you happen to have Ringuet's little book, you are not altogether ignorant of surgery?"

M. l'Ambert declared that the operation

to which he had been subjected that morning comprised his whole knowledge of the subject.

"Well," replied M. Bernier, "I can give you some ideas in a few words. Rhinoplasty is the art of restoring the nose for people who have been imprudent enough to lose it."

"Is it true then, doctor—the miracle is possible? Surgery has found a way to—"

"She has found three; but I set aside the French method, which is not applicable to the present case. If the loss of substance were less, I could scrape out the edges of the wound, and make them raw again, bring them together, and reunite them, as they were at first. But we can't dream of that."

"I'm very glad of it," responded the wounded man; "you can hardly realize, doctor, how such words as 'scrape out'

and 'make raw again' grate on my nerves; let's go on to a more gentle method, I beg of you."

"Surgeons seldom depend on gentleness. But to come to the point: you can choose between the Indian method and the Italian method. The first consists in cutting a sort of a triangle out of the skin of your forehead, the apex at the bottom, and the base at the top; that is the material for the new nose. This entire piece is turned down, except the little connection at the bottom, which ought to remain adherent; then it is turned over, so as to still leave the epidermis outside, and its edges sewed to the corresponding outline of the wound. In other words, I can make you quite a presentable nose at the expense of your forehead. The success of the operation is almost certain, but your forehead will always bear a large scar."

"I don't want any scar, doctor; I don't want it at any price; I even go so far (pardon me this weakness) as not to want any operation. I've already been subjected to one to-day, at the hands of that accursed Turk, and I've no desire for another. At the very recollection of that sensation my blood freezes! I've as much courage as gentlemen in general; but I have nerves too. I don't fear death, but I have a horror of suffering. Kill me if you will; but, for God's sake, don't hack me up!"

"Monsieur," replied the doctor, with a touch of irony, "if you have taken such an aversion against operations, you should not call in a surgeon, but a homœopath."

"Don't make fun of me; I can't bring myself to endure the idea of this Indian operation. The Indians are savages, and their surgery is worthy of them. Didn't you mention an Italian method? I don't like the Italians politically. They are an

ungrateful people, whose conduct toward their legitimate masters has been the very blackest; but as far as science goes, I have not such a bad idea of the rascals."

"So be it. We settle on the Italian method. It cures sometimes; but it requires a patience and an immobility of which perhaps you are not capable."

"If it requires nothing but patience and immobility, I can answer for myself."

"Are you a man to keep still for thirty days in an extremely uncomfortable position?"

"Yes."

"Your nose sewed to your left arm?"

"Yes."

"Very well; I will cut out of your arm a triangular piece four or five inches long, and two or three broad; I—"

"You'll cut that out of me?"

"Certainly."

"But it's horrible, doctor, to flay me

alive; to cut strips out of a living man's skin! It's barbarous! It's like the middle ages! It's worthy of Shylock, the Jew of Venice!"

"The wound in the arm is nothing; the difficulty is to stay sewed to yourself for thirty days."

"As to that, I have no insuperable fear of anything but the stroke of the scalpel. When one has felt the chill of steel entering living flesh, he has enough of it for the rest of his days, my dear doctor; he doesn't seek it any more."

"That being so, monsieur, there's nothing for me to do here. You'll be minus a nose the rest of your life."

Such a sentence plunged the poor notary into a profound consternation. He tore his beautiful blond hair, and raved around the chamber like a crazy man.

"Mutilated!" he cried, weeping. "Mutilated forever; and nothing can retrieve

my fate. If there were some drug, some mysterious substance whose virtue restores noses to people who have lost them, I must buy it for its weight in gold. I would send and have it searched for, even to the ends of the earth. Yes, I would fit out a vessel, if it were absolutely necessary—but there's nothing. What's the use of my being rich? What's the use of your being an illustrious operator, since all your skill and all my sacrifices end in this stupid failure. Riches! Science! Empty words!"

M. Bernier reiterated to him from time to time, with imperturbable calmness:

"Let me cut a little slice out of your arm, and I will restore your nose."

One moment M. l'Ambert seemed to be decided. He took off his coat and rolled up his shirt-sleeves; but when he saw the surgeon's case open, when the polished instruments of torture glistened

before his eyes, he grew pale, felt faint, and fell upon a chair in a sort of swoon.

A few drops of diluted *vinaigre* restored his senses, but not his resolution.

"There's no use thinking about it any more," said he, arranging his clothes. "Our generation has all sorts of courage, but it is weak before suffering. It's the fault of our parents, who brought us up wrapped in cotton."

A few minutes later this young man, imbued with the most religious principles, began to blaspheme against Providence.

"Indeed," he cried, "this world is a lovely bear-garden; I congratulate the Creator on it. I have two hundred thousand francs income, and here I am as flat-nosed as a skull; while my porter, who has not two crowns in the world, has the nose of the Apollo Belvedere. Omniscience, which has foreseen everything, has not foreseen that I should have my nose

cut off by a Turk for having spoken to Mlle. Tompain! There are three million beggars in France, not one of whose whole bodies is worth ten sous; but I can't buy the nose of any one of the wretches for any amount of gold. But indeed why not?"

His face beamed with a ray of hope, and he continued, in a more subdued tone: "My old uncle at Poitiers, in his last sickness, had a quantity of Breton blood injected into his veins. A faithful servant made the sacrifice essential to the experiment. My grand-aunt de Giromagny, when she was still beautiful, had a front tooth taken from her prettiest chambermaid, to replace a tooth which she herself had lost. The graft took very well, and cost only three louis. Doctor, you have told me, that hadn't it been for the voracity of that infernal cat, you could have sewed my nose on again while it was warm. Did you say so? Yes or no?"

"Certainly; I say it still."

"Very well; if I buy some poor devil's nose, could you just as well graft it on the middle of my face?"

"I could."

"Bravo!"

"But I won't do it, and none of my colleagues would do it any more than I."

"And why not, if you please?"

"Because to mutilate a healthy man is a crime, even if the patient were stupid enough or hungry enough to consent to it."

"Upon my soul, doctor, you confound all my notions of justice and injustice. For a hundred louis, I got as my substitute in the army, a sort of an Alsatian, with a big brown beard. My man (he certainly was mine) had his head carried off by a cannon ball on the 30th of April, 1849. As the cannon ball in question was incontestably intended for me, I may say

that the Alsatian sold me his head and his whole body for a hundred louis—possibly a hundred and fifty. The state not only tolerated, but approved this agreement. You have not found anything against it; possibly you have yourself bought another man, who will get himself killed for you. And when I offer to give double that amount to the first loafer that comes along, for a mere piece of his nose, you cry out: 'Scandalous!'"

The doctor hesitated an instant to find some logical reply. But not finding what he wanted, he said:

"M. l'Ambert, although my conscience does not permit me to disfigure a man for your benefit, it does seem to me that I can, without doing anything wrong, cut out of some poor fellow's arm the few square inches of skin which you need."

"Eh! my dear doctor? Get it where you please, provided you repair this stupid

accident. Let's find some good young fellow at once,—and long live the Italian method!"

"I warn you again that you will be under treatment a month."

"Well, what difference does the treatment make? I shall be at the green-room of the opera in a month!"

"Maybe! Have you any man in mind? This concierge of whom you were speaking just now?"

"Very well. He and his wife and his children could be bought for a hundred crowns. When Barbereau, my old concierge went off, I don't know where, to live on his income, a client recommended this fellow, who was literally dying of hunger."

M. l'Ambert rang for his valet, and told him to bid Singuet, the new concierge, to come up.

The man hastened in, and uttered

a cry of fright on seeing his master's face.

He was a genuine specimen of the Parisian poor devil, the poorest of all poor devils a little man of thirty-five whom you would have taken for sixty, so dried up was he, yellow, and stunted.

M. Bernier examined him at every joint; and pretty soon sent him back to his lodge.

"That fellow's skin isn't good for anything," said the doctor. "Don't you remember that gardeners take their grafts from the healthiest and most vigorous trees? Pick me out some sound fellow among your servants; there must be one."

"Yes; but you're taking things rather as a matter of course. The servants in my house are all of them gentlemen; they are men of capital, have money in bank, buy long and sell short, as all servants do in good houses. I don't know any

of them who would like to sell his blood for money, when he makes it so easily at the Bourse."

"But possibly you may find one, who from devotion—"

"Devotion! Those fellows! You're joking, doctor; our fathers had devoted servants; we've nothing but rascally hirelings. And at bottom, perhaps, we deserve them. Our fathers being loved by their dependants, felt obliged to give them some affection in return. They put up with their faults, nursed them in their illnesses, and took care of them in their old age,—and a devil of a job it was! As for me, I pay my people to do my work; and when the work is not well done, it's no business of mine whether it is indifference, old age, or sickness, I send them off."

"Then we shan't find the man we want in your household; do you think of any one else?"

"Me? Nobody. Still it's easy enough. The first fellow that happens along; the *commissionaire*[7] at the corner, or the water-carrier that I hear crying down in the street."

He took his spectacles from his pocket, raised the curtain a little, peered down the *Rue de Beaune*, and said to the doctor:

"There's a fellow who doesn't look badly. Will you be kind enough to motion to him? For I don't dare to show myself to the people passing by."

M. Bernier opened the window at the moment when the destined victim was crying at the top of his voice:

"Woo—ter! Woo—ter! Woo—ter!"[8]

"My boy," said the doctor, "leave your cask and come up here through the *Rue de Verneuil*; there's money to be made."

CHAPTER IV.

SHEBASHTIAN ROMAGNÉ.

He called himself Romagné, the name his father bore. His sponsors in baptism had given him the name of Sebastian. But as he was a native of *Frognac lès Mauriac*, in the department of Cantal, he invoked his patron saint under the name of Shaint Shebashtian. There is every reason to believe, that he would have written his first name with an Sh; but fortunately he did not know how to write. This child of Auvergne had reached the age of twenty three or four years; was built like a Hercules; large, stout, thick-set, deep-chested, big-boned, florid, strong as an ox, good-natured, and as easy to lead as a little white lamb. Imagine the most sub-

stantial sort of a man, the most clownish fellow in the world, and at the same time the best disposed.

He was the oldest of ten children, boys and girls, all living, thriving, swarming under the paternal roof. His father had a hut, a bit of land, a few chestnut-trees on the mountain, a few dozen hogs year in and year out, and two arms to delve in the earth. His mother spun flax. The little boys helped the father, and the little girls took care of the house, and brought each other up, the oldest girl acting as nurse to the girl next her, and so on to the bottom of the ladder.

The young Sebastian did not actually blaze with intelligence, or memory, or any other gift of the intellect. But he had heart enough and to spare. He had been taught a few chapters of the Catechism, just as blackbirds are taught to whistle "Polly Put the Kettle on." But he really

had, and always did have, the most Christian principles, and always lived up to them. He never abused his strength with man or beast. He avoided quarrels, and got many a rap without returning it. If the sub-prefect of Mauriac had wanted to give him a silver medal, he would only have had to write to Paris; for Sebastian had saved several people at the risk of his life, and especially two *gendarmes* who were drowning with their horses in the torrent of Saumaise. But people took these things as a matter of course, just as if he had done them by instinct, and no one any more dreamed of rewarding him, than if he had been a Newfoundland dog. At the age of twenty, he drew lots for the conscription, and got a good number, of course because of a nine days' religious service that he had observed at home, after which he made up his mind to go to Paris, conformably with the manners and

customs which prevailed in Auvergne, to make a little money for himself, and to help his father and mother. They gave him a velveteen suit and twenty francs, which still make an appreciable sum in the Arrondissement of Mauriac, and he embraced the opportunity of a comrade who knew the road to Paris. He made the journey on foot in ten days, and arrived fresh and well, with twelve and a half francs in his pocket, and his new shoes in his hand.

A couple of days later, he was dragging a water-cask in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, in company with another comrade who could not go up the flights of stairs, because he had strained himself. As the reward of his labors, he was provided with bed, board, and washing at the rate of one shirt a month; and in addition thereto was given thirty sous a week to have a good time on. By saving, he bought at

the end of the year a water-cask of his own, and set up for himself.

He prospered beyond all expectation. His naïve politeness, inexhaustible good-nature, and well-known probity, secured him the good graces of the entire neighborhood. The two thousand flights of stairs which he went up and down every day gradually increased to seven thousand. Moreover, he sent sixty francs a month to the good people at Frognac. The family blessed his name, and commended him to God, morning and evening, in their prayers. The little boys had new breeches, and there was talk of nothing less than sending the last two to school.

The author of all these blessings had in no way changed his mode of life. He slept beside his cask in a cart-house, and four times a year changed the straw of his bed. The velveteen suit was more

patched than a harlequin's dress. Indeed, he would have had to spend very little on dress, had it not been for those confounded shoes, which used up three pounds of nails a month. His table expenses were the only ones in which he did not stint himself. He allowed himself, without any haggling, four pounds of bread a day; sometimes he even regaled his stomach with a bit of cheese, an onion, or half a dozen apples, bought wholesale on the *Pont Neuf*. Sundays and fête-days he did go as far as soup and beef; and licked his fingers all the rest of the week. But he was too good a son and too good a brother to branch out into a glass of wine. "Wine, women" (and tobacco), were fabulous luxuries to him. He only knew them by reputation. *A fortiori*, he was ignorant of the pleasures of the theatre, so dear to the Paris laborer. My chap preferred going to bed at seven o'clock

gratis, to applauding M. Dumaine for ten sous.

Such in mind and body was the man whom M. Bernier hailed in the *Rue de Beaune*, to come and lend some of his skin to M. l'Ambert. The servants were notified, and brought him up as soon as possible.

He came in timidly, hat in hand, raising his feet as high as possible, not daring to let them rest on the carpet. The morning's storm had spattered him up to the shoulders.

"If itsh wooter that you want," said he, bowing to the doctor, "I—"

M. Bernier cut him short:

"No, my boy, we don't want anything in your regular line."

"Well, Moshoo, itsh shomething different, then?"

"Something entirely different. This

gentleman here had his nose cut off this morning."

"Shaprishti! poor man; and who did shuch a thing ash that?"

"A Turk; but that's of no consequence."

"A shavage! Folks hash toold me that Turksh was shavages, but I didn't knoo that they let them looshe to come to Parish. Jusht wait a bit, I'll goo and get the pooleesh!"

M. Bernier stopped the worthy Auvergnat's outburst of zeal, and in a few words explained the service required of him. He thought at first that they were making fun of him, for a man may be an excellent water-carrier and not have any notion of rhinoplasty. The doctor made him understand that they wanted to buy a month of his time and about four square inches of his skin."

"The operation is nothing," he said; "you have very little to suffer; but I

warn you in advance that you will need enormous patience, to keep still for a whole month, with your arm sewed to monsieur's nose."

"Ash to patiensh," he answered, "I'b enough of that; one ish not an Oubergnat for nothing. But if I shtay a month here to do this shervish to thish poor man, my time musht be paid at what it'sh worth."

"That's a matter of course; how much do you wish?"

He thought a moment and said:

"On my coonsciencsh, it'sh worth a matter of foor francsh a day."

"No, my friend," responded the notary, "it's worth a thousand francs a month, or thirty-three francs a day."

"No," spoke up the doctor, with authority, "it's worth two thousand francs."

M. l'Ambert inclined his head, and raised no objection.

Romagné asked permission to finish his

day's work, put up his cask in the cart-house, and seek a substitute for a month.

"Beshidesh," he said, "it'sh not worth while to commensh on an odd half day."

They convinced him that the matter was urgent, and he arranged his affairs accordingly. One of his friends was notified, and agreed to take his place for the month.

"You'll fetch me my bread ebery day?" said Romagné.

They told him that this precaution was unnecessary, and that he could take his meals in the house.

"That dependsh on what it coshts."

"M. l'Ambert will feed you gratis."

"Gratish? you mean you'll throow it in? Here'sh my shkin; cut away."

He endured the operation like a hero, without wincing.

"It ish a pleashure," he said. "They told me of an Oubergnat, down my way,

who let himshelf get cobered ober with shtone (they callsh it petrified) in a shpring, for twenty shoush an hour. I rather get myshelf cut up peashmeal. It ish lessh confining and agreesh with me better."

M. Bernier sewed his left arm to the notary's face, and the two men remained for a month fastened to each other.

The Siamese twins, who used to amuse the curiosity of Europe, were not more indissoluble; but they were brothers, accustomed from childhood to put up with each other, and they had received the same education. If one had been a water-carrier, and the other a notary, possibly they would not have presented the spectacle of so fraternal a friendship.

Romagné never complained of anything, although the situation seemed somewhat novel. He yielded as a slave, or rather as a Christian, to all the whims of the man

who had bought his skin. He got up and sat down, laid down, turned to the right or left, according to the caprice of his lord. The needle is not more constant to the pole, than Romagné was in his submission to M. l'Ambert.

This heroic gentleness touched the notary's heart, which was, nevertheless, by no means tender. For three days he experienced a sort of gratitude for his victim's kindness. But he was not very slow in conceiving a distaste for him; then disgust, and then horror.

A young man, active and healthy, never can easily accustom himself to absolute immobility. What must it be, then, when he is forced to remain in fixed association with a creature coarse, inferior, and without education? But the die was cast; and he had to live without a nose or put up with the Auvergnat and all his consequences—to eat with him, sleep with him,

to perform every function of life with him at hand and in the most awkward positions.

Romagné was a worthy and excellent young man, but he snored like an organ. He adored his family, and loved his neighbor; but he never took a bath, for fear of wasting the commodity he dealt in. His sentiments were the most delicate in the world, but he did not know how to impose upon himself the most elementary constraints which civilization prescribes for us. Poor M. l'Ambert! poor Romagné! what nights and days! what kicks given and received! It is unnecessary to say that Romagné received them without complaining. His greatest fear was that some wrong motion might spoil Doctor Bernier's experiment.

The notary received a good many visits. His boon companions came to see him, and made sport of the Auvergnat. They

taught him to smoke cigars, and drink wine and brandy, and the poor devil gave himself up to these pleasures with the innocence of a savage. They got him tipsy, they got him drunk, they made him descend all the steps which separate man from the brute. The fellow needed education;—and these fine gentlemen took a great deal of pleasure in giving it to him. Was it not something new and agreeable to ruin an Auvergnat?

One day one of them asked him how he intended to use M. l'Ambert's hundred louis, when he should have earned them.

"I'll plashe them at fibe per shent," he answered, "and I'll get a hundred francsh interesht."

"And after that?" queried a nice little millionnaire of twenty-five years. "Will you be richer? will you be happier? You will have six sous income a day; if you marry, as is inevitable—for you're made

of the timber they make fools of—you'll have a dozen youngsters at least."

"Yesh, it'sh posshible."

"And under the Civil Code, which is a fine invention of the empire, you'll leave each of them two farthings a day to live on. And all this in spite of the fact that with the two thousand francs you can live like a rich man for a whole month, experience the pleasures of life, and rise above your equals."

He struggled like a good fellow against these attempts to corrupt him. But he received so many repeated taps on his thick head, that they opened a passage for the false ideas, and his brain was upset.

The ladies came too. M. l'Ambert knew a great many, and of all descriptions. Romagné was present at a great variety of scenes. He heard protestations of love and fidelity which rather lacked probability. Not only did M. l'Ambert unhes-

itatingly tell lies before him, with the greatest freedom, but he sometimes amused himself, when they were alone together, by teaching him the deceptions which are, so to speak, the canvas on which fashionable life is embroidered.

And the world of business! Romagné thought he had discovered it, like Christopher Columbus; for he never had any idea of such things before. The clients in the office kept no more guard over their conversation before him, than if he had been an oyster. He saw fathers of families who were seeking ways to rob their sons, under forms of law, for the sake of mistresses or speculation; young men about to marry, who were trying to learn the art of stealing their wife's dowry, under the marriage contract; lenders who wanted twenty per cent. on first mortgages, and borrowers who gave mortgages where there was no value.

He had not a bit of imagination, nor much more intelligence than a poodle, but his conscience was sometimes shocked. One day, he saw fit to say to M. l'Ambert:

"You hab not my eshteem."

And the repugnance the notary had for him, changed into open hate.

The last week of their forced intimacy was filled with a series of tempests. But at length, M. Bernier announced that the strip of skin had taken root, in spite of innumerable wrenches. He cut the two enemies apart, and shaped the notary a nose out of the skin which no longer belonged to Romagné. And the handsome millionnaire of the *Rue de Verneuil,* threw two one thousand franc notes to his slave, saying:

"Begone, you scoundrel! the money is nothing. You've made me spend five thousand francs' worth of patience. Clear

out! Leave here forever! Don't let me ever hear of you again!"

Romagné thanked him with dignity, drank a bottle of wine in the servants' hall, two glasses of brandy with Singuet, and started off, reeling, toward his old abiding-place.

CHAPTER V.

PRIDE AND A FALL.

M. L'AMBERT went back into society with success; one might say with glory. His seconds did him very ample justice, in saying that he had fought like a lion. The old notaries were made young again by his courage.

"Eh! eh! eh! See what sort of fellows we are, when we're driven to extremities; in being a notary one is none the less a man. Master l'Ambert has been betrayed by the fortune of arms; but he was noble to fall in such away; it was a Waterloo. There's good stuff in us yet, never mind what folks say."

So spoke the respectable Master Clopineau, and the worthy Master Labrique,

and the unctuous Master Bontoux, and all the nestors of the notarial profession. The young masters held pretty near the same language, with certain variations inspired by jealousy.

"We don't want to say anything against Master l'Ambert; he is an honor to us certainly, although he does compromise us a little. Any one of us would have shown just as much pluck, and possibly less awkwardness. An officer of the law ought not to permit himself to be trodden under foot; at the same time, he ought not to give the first offence. He ought to fight only for reasons that can be talked about anywhere. If I were father of a family, I would rather entrust my business to a steady fellow, than to a knight-errant," etc., etc., etc.

But the opinion of the ladies, which makes law, was decidedly in favor of the hero of Parthenay. Possibly it would

have been a little less unanimous if they had known the episode of the cat. Possibly, indeed, the unjust and charming sex would have declared M. l'Ambert in the wrong, if he had permitted himself to return to the gaze of the world without a nose. But all the seconds had kept the ridiculous side of the affair strictly to themselves. Moreover, M. l'Ambert, far from being disfigured, appeared to have gained by the change. A baroness remarked that his expression was much sweeter since he had been wearing a straight nose. An old canoness, who was kept preserved in malice, asked the Prince de B—— if it would not be a good idea to go off pretty soon, and pick a quarrel with a Turk. Prince de B——'s aquiline nose enjoyed an immense reputation.

Some one will ask, how ladies in society could feel any interest in dangers which had not been incurred for them. M. l'Am-

bert's habits were known, and it was no secret how large a portion of his time and his heart was expended at the opera. But the world easily pardons these little aberrations in men who do not give themselves up to them altogether. It is wise to be satisfied with half a loaf, rather than go without bread. It seemed well enough that M. l'Ambert should go half way to perdition, while so many men of his age went the whole. He never neglected good houses; he talked with the dowagers, and danced with the young girls; he occasionally made passable music, and never talked horse. These merits, so rare among young millionnaires of the Faubourg, secured him the good-will of the ladies. It was even said, that more than one had thought she was doing the Lord's service in entering the lists against the ballet green-room. One pretty, pious woman, Madame de L—— had proved

to him, for three whole months, that the keenest pleasures are not to be found in scandal and dissipation.

Nevertheless he had never broken off with the *corps de ballet.* The severe lesson he had received did not inspire him with any horror of that hydra with a hundred pretty heads. One of his first visits was to the green-room where shone Mlle. Victorine Tompain. There indeed they gave him a fine reception. With what friendly curiosity they gathered around him! How they called him "the dearest fellow," and "so nice"! What cordial grasps of the hand! What pretty little beaks were stuck up to him to receive an innocent, friendly kiss! He was radiant. All his old boon companions, all the dignitaries in the freemasonry of pleasure, complimented him on his miraculous cure. For a whole *entr'acte* he reigned in this agreeable kingdom. They listened to the

account of his duel; they made him describe Dr. Bernier's treatment, and they admired the delicacy of the lines of suture, which could hardly be seen at all.

"Just fancy," said he, "that that excellent M. Bernier pieced me out with the skin of an Auvergnat. And such an Auvergnat! Good God! The stupidest, thickest-headed, dirtiest fellow of all Auvergne. You would not suspect it from seeing the piece of himself, that he sold me. The beast made me pass many disagreeable hours. The *commissionaires* at the corners of the street are dandies, compared with him. But I'm well rid of him, thank Heaven! When I paid him and kicked him out of doors, I was relieved from a heavy burden. His name was Romagné—a touching name! Don't ever pronounce it before me. Nobody will say Romagné to me, if he wants me to live! Romagné!!!"

Mlle. Victorine Tompain was not the last to compliment the hero. Ayvaz-Bey had infamously abandoned her, leaving her four times as much money as her merits justified. The handsome notary showed himself amiable and forgiving toward her.

"I bear you no ill-will," he said; "I even haven't any grudge against that brave Turk. I have only one enemy in the world, and he is an Auvergnat by the name of Romagné."

He said Romagné with an intonation comic enough to make his fortune on the stage. And I believe that even to this day, the majority of those girls say "*Mon Romagné*," when they speak of their water-carriers.

Three months passed; three months of summer. The season was beautiful, and few people had remained in Paris. The opera was invaded by strangers and

people from the country; M. l'Ambert appeared there less frequently.

Almost every day at six, he laid aside his official gravity, and hurried off to *Maisons-Lafitte*, where he had hired a cottage. His friends went there to see him—even some of those from the green-room. They played at all sorts of out-door games in the garden, and I can assure you that the swing was not left hanging idle.

One of his most frequent and liveliest visitors was M. Steimbourg, the broker. The Parthenay affair had brought him into closer intimacy with M. l'Ambert. M. Steimbourg belonged to a good family of converted Jews. Their family estate was worth two millions. He had the right to quarter of it himself. It was proper, then, to hold close relations with him. The mistresses of the two friends got along together very well; that is to say,

they did not quarrel more than once a week at most. How beautiful to see four hearts which beat as one! The men went riding, read Figaro, or retailed the town gossip. The women took turns in telling fortunes by cards in the most entertaining way. The golden age in miniature!

M. Steimbourg made it his duty to present his friend to his family. He took him to Biéville, where the elder Steimbourg had built himself a château. M. l'Ambert was graciously received by a very hale old gentleman, a lady of fifty-two who had not yet abdicated, and two young girls who were finished coquettes. The girls had seen everything played at the theatres, and read everything written in books. Few people knew better than they the fashionable gossip of Paris. They had had pointed out to them at the play, and in the *Bois de Boulogne*, the most celebrated beauties of all circles. They

had been taken to see some elegant establishments sold out, and they could descant most agreeably on Mlle. X's emeralds, and Mlle. Z's pearls. The elder, Mlle. Irma Steimbourg, copied the toilettes of Mlle. Fargueil with passionate enthusiasm. The younger had sent one of her friends to Mlle. Figeac to ask the address of her dress-maker. Both were rich and would have good dowries. M. l'Ambert took a fancy to Irma. The handsome notary occasionally said to himself that half a million dowry and a woman who knows how to dress are not things to be sneezed at. He was to be seen there pretty often, almost once a week, even up to the early November frosts.

After a mild and pleasant autumn, winter came down like an avalanche—a circumstance common enough in our climate. But M. l'Ambert's nose at this time manifested a sensibility not quite so

common. It reddened a little, then a great deal, and swelled up by degrees almost to the point of deformity. After a hunting party that had been kept in high spirits by the north wind, the notary experienced an intolerable itching. He looked in the glass at an inn, and found the color of his nose not at all to his taste: you would have called it a chilblain in the wrong place.

He consoled himself with the thought that a good hot fire would bring back its natural appearance. And in fact it did relieve his nose and restore its color for a few moments; but the itching returned the next day, the tissues swelled up enormously, and the red color reappeared with a slight addition of violet. A week passed in the house before the fireplace effaced the fatal tint; but it reappeared the first time he went out, in spite of his gray-fox furs.

This time M. l'Ambert got frightened and sent post-haste for M. Bernier. The doctor hurried to him, called it a slight inflammation, and prescribed compresses of ice-water. This eased the nose, but by no means cured it. M. Bernier was astonished at the stubbornness of the disorder.

"After all," said he, "perhaps Dieffenbach is right; he claims that the strip we cut off can die from excess of blood, and leeches ought to be applied to it; we'll try it."

The notary suspended a leech from the end of his nose; when it fell off, gorged with blood, it was replaced by another; and so on for two days and nights. The swelling and discoloration disappeared for a time, but the improvement was not of long duration. Something else was needed. M. Bernier asked for twenty-four hours for reflection, and took forty-eight.

When he returned to the house in the *Rue de Verneuil*, he was anxious and even timid, and it cost an effort to master himself before saying to M. l'Ambert.

"Medicine does not embrace all natural phenomena; and I have come to submit to you a theory which has no scientific character. My colleagues would perhaps make sport of me if I were to tell them that a piece taken from a man's body can remain under the influence of its former possessor. It is your blood propelled by your heart, under the action of your brain, which has this unfortunate tendency to your nose. Nevertheless I am tempted to believe that that booby of an Auvergnat is not a stranger to the circumstance."

M. l'Ambert exclaimed against this loudly. The idea that that vile mercenary whom he had paid, and whom he owed nothing, could exercise an occult influence

on the nose of a government official, was almost an impertinence!

"It's worse," answered the doctor; "it's an absurdity. Nevertheless I want you to let me go and hunt up Romagné. I want to see him to-day; if for no other reason, to convince myself of my error. Have you kept his address?"

"God forbid!"

"Very well. I'll go and try to find him. Keep your patience and stay in your room, and don't doctor yourself any more."

He hunted for a fortnight; the police came to his aid, and kept him off the track three weeks. Half a dozen Romagnés were found. A detective of great experience unearthed all the Romagnés in Paris except the one they wanted. They found a retired soldier, a dealer in wolf skins, a lawyer, a thief, a dry-goods clerk, a gendarme, and a millionnaire. M. l'Ambert was before his fire, fairly broiling

with impatience, and contemplating his scarlet nose with despair. At last they found the place where the water-carrier used to live. He was not there any more. The neighbors said that he had made his fortune, sold his cask, and gone off to enjoy life.

M. Bernier beat through taverns, and other haunts of pleasure, while his patient stayed at home plunged in melancholy. On the second of February, at ten o'clock in the morning, the handsome notary was sadly toasting his feet, and squintingly contemplating the blooming peony in the centre of his face, when a joyous tumult disturbed the whole house. The doors opened with a bang, the valets cried out with surprise, and at last the doctor appeared leading Romagné by the hand.

It was the genuine Romagné, but very different from himself. Dirty, besotted, hideous, with dull eyes and fetid breath,

reeking with rum and tobacco, red as a boiled lobster from head to foot; he was less a man than a living erysipelas.

"Monster!" said M. Bernier, "you ought to die of shame; you have debased yourself below the brutes. If you still preserve the face of a man, you have no longer the color of one. How have you used the little fortune which we made for you? You have grovelled in the lowest depths of debauchery. I found you outside the fortifications of Paris, wallowing like a pig before the door of the dirtiest of taverns."

The Auvergnat raised his great eyes toward the doctor, and said in his amiable accent, embellished with an intonation from the faubourgs:

"Well, what ob it; I'b been habing a good time; thatsh no reashon for you to talk nonshensh to me."

"What are you calling nonsense? I'm

reproaching you for your misdeeds, that's all. Why didn't you invest your money, instead of drinking it up?"

"He toold me to amushe myshelf."

"You rascal," cried the notary, "did I tell you to swill brandy and blue-ruin in the stews?"

"Folksh amushe themshelvesh ash they can; I'b been off with my friendsh."

"A fine lot they are, your friends! Here I make a marvellous cure which spreads my reputation through Paris, which some day or other will open the doors of the institute to me, and you go with a lot of drunkards of the same sort, and spoil my divine work. If you were the only thing concerned, bless me! we would leave you to do what you pleased. It's physical and moral suicide; but an Auvergnat more or less makes no difference to society. The matter concerns a gentleman of consequence, though,—a man

of property, your benefactor and my patient. You have compromised him, disfigured, assassinated him, by your misconduct. See to what a lamentable condition you have brought Monsieur!"

The poor devil contemplated the nose which he had furnished, and burst into tears.

"It'sh bery unlucky, Moshoo Bernier, but I call God to witnessh that it'sh not my fault. The noshe got shick all by itshelf. *Shaprishti!* I'm an innoshent man; and I shwear to you, that I'b not eben touched it."

"Fool!" said M. l'Ambert, "you will never understand. And, moreover, there's no reason why you should understand. It's only necessary for you to say, without any more words, that you will change your course of conduct, and give up this life of debauchery which is killing me by reaction. I give you fair notice, that I have a long

arm, and that if you persist in your vices, I will know how to put you in a safe place."

"In prizhon?"

"In prison!"

"In prizhon with criminalsh? Mershy! Moshoo l'Ambert, that will be a dishhonor to my family."

"Are you going to drink any more? Yes or no?"

"Ah! Good God! how can a fellow drink when he hash not a shou left? I hab shpent eberything, Moshoo l'Ambert. I hab drunk up my two thoushand francsh. I hab drunk up my cashk and all the money I had in bank, and nobody on the fashe ob the earth will trusht me any more!"

"So much the better, you amusing rascal. You've done well!"

"Yesh indeed; I ought to behabe myshelf! Mizhery ish coming upon me, Moshoo l'Ambert."

"Time it should!"

"Moshoo l'Ambert?"

"What?"

"If you only would be sho berry good and get me a wooter-cashk to shet myshelf up in the woorld again, I shwear to you I would be a good fellow."

"Get out! You would sell it for drink."

"No, Moshoo l'Ambert, on the word of an honesht man."

"On the word of a sot!"

"But you want me to die, then, ob hunger and thirsht? A hundred fransch, good Moshoo l'Ambert?"

"Not a centime; Providence has made you miserably poor that you might restore me my natural appearance. Drink water, eat dry bread, go without the necessities of life, die of hunger if you can; for at such a price I should get back my natural advantages and become myself again."

Romagné hung his head, and went out scraping his foot and saluting the company.

The notary was full of joy, and the worthy doctor was in his glory.

"I don't want to sing my own praises," modestly said M. Bernier; "but Leverrier, discovering a planet solely through his calculations, accomplished no greater a miracle than I. To divine from the appearance of your nose that an Auvergnat absent and lost in Paris had given himself up to debauchery, is to come up from the effect to the cause by roads which human daring has not hitherto attempted. As to the treatment of the disorder, it is indicated by the circumstances. Diet applied to Romagné is the only remedy which can cure you. Chance serves us wonderfully, since the animal has eaten up his last sou. You did well to refuse him the help he begged for. All the

efforts of science would be vain if this fellow were to have anything to buy drink with."

"But, doctor," interrupted M. l'Ambert, "suppose my trouble did not rise from that? If you have been the sport of some fortuitous coincidence? Didn't you yourself tell me that the theory—"

"I have said, and I maintain, that in the present state of our knowledge, your case admits of no logical explanation; it is a phenomenon whose law is yet to be discovered. The correspondence that we observe to-day between the health of your nose and the conduct of this Auvergnat, opens a perspective which may be deceitful; but it is certainly immense. Let us wait a few days. If your nose gets well in the same degree as Romagné behaves himself, my theory will receive the additional support of a new probability.. I don't answer for anything, but I suspect

the existence of a law in physiology hitherto unknown, and which I should be happy to formulate. The world of science is full of visible phenomena produced by unknown causes. Why has Madame de L——, whom you know as well as I, a cherry admirably painted on her left shoulder? Is it, as they say, because her mother while pregnant had a violent longing for a basket of cherries exposed for sale by Chevet? What invisible artist depicted this fruit on the body of a six weeks fœtus, about the size of an average prawn? How can this special action of the mind upon the body be explained? Why does Madame de L——'s cherry become sensitive and painful every year about the month of April, when cherries are in blossom? Here are facts, certain, evident, palpable, and just as inexplicable as the swelling and redness of your nose. But patience!"

Two days later the swelling on M. l'Ambert's nose had visibly gone down, but the red color remained. Toward the end of the week, its volume was reduced a good third. In about a fortnight, the skin peeled off horribly, a new skin appeared, and the nose entirely resumed its original form and color. The doctor was in triumph.

"My only regret," he said, "is that we didn't keep Romagné in a cage, to watch the effect of the treatment upon him, as we have upon you. I'm sure that, for a week or so, he was covered with scales like an adder."

"May the devil take him!" added M. l'Ambert in a Christian spirit.

Thenceforward he resumed his old habits, and went out in his carriage, on horseback, and on foot. He danced at the balls of the Faubourg, and embellished the green-room of the opera with his presence.

All the ladies heartily welcomed him, both those in society and out of it. One of those who congratulated him most tenderly on his cure was the elder sister of his friend Steimbourg.

That lovely creature was in the habit of considering men just as she considered horses. She very judiciously observed that M. l'Ambert had come out of his last crisis handsomer than ever. Yes, really it seemed that two or three months of suffering had added some indescribable perfection to his face. The nose above all—that straight nose which had returned to its proper limits after its painful expansion—appeared finer, whiter, and more aristocratic than ever.

This, too, was the handsome notary's own opinion. He contemplated himself in all the glasses with ever-fresh admiration. It was a pleasure to see him face to face with himself, smiling at his own nose.

But on the return of spring, in the latter part of March, while the generous sap was distending the lilac buds, M. l'Ambert had occasion to realize that his nose was the only thing robbed of the benefits of the season and the bounties of nature. Amid the regeneration of everything else, it paled as an autumn leaf. The nostrils pinched and dried up, as it were, under the breath of an invisible sirocco, hung flat against the partition between them which Doctor Bernier had provided.

"By all that's distressing!" said the notary, making a face at himself in the glass; "an aristocratic appearance is a fine thing, like virtue, but one doesn't want too much of it. My nose is becoming lean to a degree to make one anxious; and pretty soon it will be nothing more than a shadow, if I don't restore its strength and color."

He put a little rouge on it. But the

color only served to bring out the almost incredible fineness of the straight line "without thickness," which divided his face. Just like the iron blade which rises thin and sharp in the middle of a sun-dial, was the fantastic nose of our desperate notary.

In vain the rich native of the *Rue de Verneuil* put himself upon the most substantial diet. Considering that good living, digested by a sound stomach, benefits all parts of the body nearly equally, he imposed upon himself the agreeable task of taking a great deal of rich soup, a great deal of jelly, and a great deal of rare meat, washed down with a great deal of the most generous wines. To say that these select aliments did him no good, would be to deny the evidence, and blaspheme against good cheer. M. l'Ambert in a short time gave himself handsome red cheeks, a fine apoplectic bull neck, and a

jolly little fat belly. But the nose remained like a negligent or indifferent partner who did not collect his dividends.

When a sick person cannot eat or drink, he is sometimes sustained by nourishing baths, which penetrate through the skin to the sources of life. M. l'Ambert treated his nose like a patient who must be specially nourished, cost what it will. For its sole behoof, he ordered a little silver-gilt bath. Six times a day he plunged and patiently kept it in baths of milk, Burgundy wine, strong soup, and even tomato sauce. The pains were wasted. The patient came out of the bath as pale, thin, and deplorable, as it had entered. All hope seemed lost, when one day M. Bernier tapped his forehead, and cried:

"We've made an enormous mistake—a regular school-boy blunder! And that I should do it, when the thing brought such a striking confirmation to the support

of my theory! There's no doubt of it, monsieur: the Auvergnat is sick, and he is the only patient to treat if we're going to cure you."

Poor M. l'Ambert tore his hair. Then at last he did regret putting Romagné out of doors, refusing him the help he asked, and forgetting to take his address. He imagined the poor devil languishing on a pallet, without bread, without roast beef, and without Château-Margaux. At this idea, his heart was broken. He fancied himself enduring the poor beggar's sufferings. For the first time in his life, he was affected by another's misfortune.

"Doctor, dear doctor," he cried, pressing M. Bernier's hand, "I'll give all I'm worth to save that excellent young man."

Five days later, the disorder had steadily increased. The nose was nothing more than a flexible pellicle, yielding under the weight of the spectacles, when M.

Bernier came to say that he had found the Auvergnat.

"Victory!" cried M. l'Ambert.

The surgeon shrugged his shoulders, and answered that the victory seemed to him at least doubtful.

"My theory," said he, "is abundantly confirmed, and as a physiologist I have every reason to declare myself satisfied. But as a doctor, I would like to cure you, and the condition in which I found the unhappy fellow leaves me little hope."

"You will save him, dear doctor?"

"Well, in the first place, he doesn't belong to me; he is under the treatment of one of my colleagues, who is studying him with a certain curiosity."

"He'll give him up to you; we'll buy him if necessary."

"Don't dream of that. Doctors don't sell their patients. They kill them sometimes in the interest of science, to see

what they have inside of them; but to make them objects of commerce—Never! Perhaps my friend Fogatier will give me your Auvergnat. But the scamp is very sick; and to complete the misfortune, he's taken such a distaste for life that he don't care to get well. He throws away all his medicine. As for food, sometimes he complains that he has not enough, and calls out for all he can get with loud cries; and sometimes he refuses what they give him, and asks to be left to die of hunger."

"That's a crime! I'll speak to him; I'll make him listen to the voice of morality and religion. Where is he?"

"At the *Hotel Dieu*, Ward St. Paul, No. 10—"

"You have your carriage downstairs?"

"Yes."

"Well, let's start. Oh! the depraved wretch! Wishing to die! He don't seem to know that all men are brothers!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY OF A PAIR OF SPECTACLES, AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF A COLD IN THE HEAD.

NEVER did any preacher, never did Bossuet or Fénelon, never did Massillon or Fléchier, never did M. Mermilliod himself dispense from his pulpit eloquence mightier, and at the same time more alluring, than did M. Alfred l'Ambert at the bedside of Romagné. First he appealed to the reason; then to the conscience, and finally to the heart of his patient. He called into play arguments both sacred and profane—cited Holy Writ, and the philosophers. He was powerful and gentle, severe and paternal, logical, caressing, and even jocular. He proved that

suicide was the most shameful of all crimes; and that one must be very cowardly, voluntarily to choose death. He even ventured upon a metaphor as new as it was bold, comparing the suicide to the deserter who abandons his post without the permission of his corporal.

The Auvergnat, who had not swallowed anything for twenty-four hours, seemed bent on his idea. He held himself steady and stubborn before death, like a jackass before a bridge. To the closest argument he responded with imperturbable sweetness:

"It'sh not worth while, Moshoo l'Ambert; there'sh too much mizhery in thish world."

"But, my dear friend, misery is a divine institution; it is created expressly to develop charity among the rich, and resignation among the poor."

"Richesh! I ashked for work, and

eberybody refushed it to me. I ashked charity, and they shaid they'd call the poleeshe."

"Why didn't you appeal to your friends? to me, for instance; to me, who wish you well; to me, who have your blood in my veins?"

"Jusht sho! Sho you could pitch me out of doorsh!"

"My door will be always open to you; so will my purse, so will my heart!"

"If you'd only let me had fifty francsh to buy a new wooter-cashk."

"But you brute!—you dear old brute, I would say—let me joke with you a little, as I did when you shared my bed and table—it's no fifty francs I will give you, but a thousand—ten thousand!—my whole fortune I wish to divide with you—in proportion to our respective needs. You must live; you must be happy. See! Spring has come back with her train of flowers

and the sweet music of the birds in the branches. Could you have the heart to give up all these? Think of the grief of your excellent parents, of your old father, who is waiting for you in the country; and of your brothers and sisters. Think of your mother, my friend! she would never survive you! You shall see them again—no, not exactly that:—you ought to stay in Paris under my eyes, in closest intimacy with me. I want to see you happy; married to a good little wife, father of two or three, pretty children. Ah! you smile! take some of this soup!"

"I'm bery thankful to you, Moshoo l'Ambert. Keep the shoup—there'sh no ushe taking any moor; there'sh too much mizhery in thish world."

"But when I swear to you that your evil days are over, that I take upon myself the responsibility of your future, on my word as a notary. If you consent to

live, you shall suffer no more, you shall work no more; your year shall be made up of three hundred and sixty-five Sundays!"

"And no Mondaysh?"

"All Mondays, if you prefer; you shall eat, you shall drink, you shall smoke Cabañas at thirty sous apiece. You shall be my boon companion, my inseparable friend, my other self. Wouldn't you like to live, Romagné, to be my other self?"

"No; sho much the worsh! Ash I hab commenshed to die, I may ash well finish up now."

"Ah! That's it! Very well, I'll tell you, you great brute, to what fate you condemn yourself; it is not merely an affair of the eternal torments that every minute of your stubbornness brings nearer; but in this world, here, to-morrow, to-day perhaps, before going to rot, in the Potter's Field, you shall be carried to the dissecting-room;

they will throw you on a stone table, and cut your body to pieces. Some young sawbones will chop open that great ass's head of yours with an axe; another will ransack your breast with great cuts of a scalpel, to find out if there is any heart in that stupid enclosure; another—"

"Shtop! Sthop! Moshoo l'Ambert! I don't want to be cut up in pieshes! I'd rather take the shoup!"

Three days on soup, and the strength of his constitution, brought him out of his bad state, and he could be taken in a carriage to the house in the *Rue de Verneuil.* M. l'Ambert installed him there himself, as carefully as a mother; he put him in his own valet's room, so as to have him as near himself as possible. For a month he discharged the duties of sick-nurse, and even sat up several nights.

These fatigues, instead of destroying his health, brought back the freshness

and brightness to his face. The more he tasked himself in taking care of the poor devil, the more his nose recovered its firmness and color. His life was divided between the duties of his office, the Auvergnat, and the mirror. It was during this period, that one day he absently wrote on a rough draft of a bill of sale: "It is sweet to do good"—a maxim somewhat old in itself, but entirely new to him.

When Romagné was certainly convalescent, his host and saviour, who had cut off so many slices of bread for him, and cut up so many beefsteaks, said:

"After this we'll dine together every day—though if you would rather eat in the servants' hall, you will be well taken care of there, and may enjoy it better."

Romagné, like a man of sense, decided to go with the servants. He fixed himself there, and behaved in such a way as to win all hearts. Instead of putting on airs

because of the master's friendship, he was more modest and good-natured than the little scullion. In fact, M. l'Ambert had given his servants a servant. Everybody used him, laughed at his accent, and gave him many a friendly cuff. No one ever dreamed of paying him anything. M. l'Ambert sometimes happened on him carrying water, moving heavy furniture, or polishing the floors; and on such occasions the good notary pinched his ear, and said, "Amuse yourself; I'm willing; but don't fatigue yourself too much."

The poor fellow was confused by so many kindnesses, and went to his room to weep for gratitude.

He could not keep it very long—that large convenient chamber, adjoining the master's apartment. M. l'Ambert delicately gave him to understand that his *valet-de-chambre* needed it very much—and Romagné himself asked permission to

lodge in the garret. They were all eagerness to accommodate him, and he got a hole which the kitchen girls had never cared to take.

A wise man has said, "Happy the people who have no history." Sebastian Romagné was happy three months. Early in June he began to have a history—His heart, long invulnerable, was pierced by the arrows of Cupid. The ex-water-carrier gave himself up, bound hand and foot, to the god who destroyed Troy. He became aware, while shelling peas, that the cook had fine little gray eyes and beautiful big red cheeks.

A sigh fit to upset the tables was the first symptom of his disorder. He wished to unbosom himself; but the words stuck in his throat. He scarcely dared catch his Dulcinea around the waist and kiss her on the lips, so excessive was his timidity.

He was understood at once. The cook

was a capable girl, seven or eight years older than he, and experienced in affairs of the heart.

"I see what's the matter," she said; "You want to marry me. Very well, my boy, we can come to an understanding, if you've anything to depend upon."

He answered naïvely that he had everything to depend upon that could be required of a man; namely, two strong arms accustomed to work.

Demoiselle Jeannette laughed in his face, and spoke more distinctly.

He burst out laughing, in his turn, and said with the most amiable confidence:

"It'sh money that you want! Why didn't you shay sho at firsht! I've got lotsh of it. Money! how much will you have? Name the shum. Will half M. l'Ambert's fortune do? will that be enough?"

"Half of Monsieur's fortune?"

"Shertainly; for he hash toold me sho more than a hundred timesh. Half hish fortune'sh mine; but we'b not dibided the cash yet. He'sh keeping it for me."

"Nonsense!"

"Nonshenshe? Shtop! here he comesh, I'll go and ashk him for my share, and I'll bring the big pennies to you in the kitchen."

Poor innocent! He received from his master a good lesson in the grammar of high life. M. l'Ambert impressed upon him that to promise and to fulfil are not necessarily synonymes. He went so far as to explain (for he was in a good humor) the merits and dangers of the figure of speech called hyperbole; and finally he told him with a gentle firmness, that admitted of no reply:

"Romagné, I've done a good deal for you; and I want to do more, by sending you away from this house. Good sense

must tell you that you're not here as master; and I've too much goodness to let you stay here as servant. In a word, I think I should be doing you a poor service in keeping you in an uncertain position, which would spoil your habits and pervert your character. A year more of this lazy, dependent life, you would lose taste for work, and you would become a man out of place. Now, I ought to say to you, that men out of their proper places are the curse of our age. Put your hand on your heart, and tell me if you would be willing to become the curse of your age. Poor, unfortunate fellow! haven't you more than once sighed for the honest name of laboring man—your title of nobility? For you are one of those whom God has created to ennoble themselves by useful effort; you belong to the aristocracy of labor. Work, then—no longer as you used to, in uncertainty and privation; but

in security which I will guarantee, and in abundance proportionate to your modest wants. I'll supply money enough to get you established—and I'll get work for you. If, through some impossibility, you should lack the means of living, you will find something to fall back upon wherever I am. But give up this absurd project of marrying my cook. For you ought not to bind your lot with that of a servant. And I don't want any children about the house!"

The unfortunate fellow wept with all his eyes, and overflowed with expressions of gratitude. I ought to say, in justice to M. l'Ambert, that he did quite the proper thing. He gave Romagné a fresh outfit of clothing, furnished a chamber on the fifth floor in an old house in the *Rue Cherche-midé*, and gave him five hundred francs to live upon while waiting for work. A week had not passed before he got him

a place in a large looking-glass factory in the *Rue de Sèvres*.

Some time elapsed, perhaps six months, without the notary's nose giving any intelligence of the man who furnished it. But one day when our man of law, together with his head clerk, was deciphering the parchments of a rich and noble family, his gold spectacles broke in the middle, and fell on the table.

This little accident did not disturb him much. He took up an eye-glass with a steel spring, and sent his spectacles to the *quai des orfevres*, to be exchanged.

His optician, M. Luna, took the trouble to send a thousand excuses, with a pair of new spectacles which broke, before twenty-four hours had passed, in the same spot.

A third pair met the same fate, and a fourth followed, and broke just like them. The optician no longer knew what kind of

an excuse to make. In the bottom of his soul, he was persuaded that M. l'Ambert was to blame. He said to his wife, showing her the devastation of the last four days :

" This young man is not reasonable. He wears number four glasses, which are necessarily very heavy. And through pure dandyism, wants the mounting as slender as a thread ; and I'm sure he bangs his spectacles about as if they were made of wrought-iron. If I were to say anything, he would be put out. But I'm going to send him something in stronger mountings."

Madame Luna approved the idea ; but the fifth pair of spectacles met the fate of the first four. This time M. l'Ambert flushed angrily, though nothing had been said to him, and took his custom to a rival house.

But it seemed as though all the opti-

cians in Paris had conspired to break their spectacles over the poor millionnaire's nose. A dozen pair came to grief there. And the most marvellous thing about it was that an eye-glass with a steel spring, which filled in the interregnums, kept strong and elastic.

You know patience was not M. l'Ambert's distinctive virtue. One day he was trampling on a pair of spectacles and mashing them with blows of his heel, when Dr. Bernier was announced.

"*Parbleu!*" cried the notary. "You came just in the nick of time—I'm bewitched. The devil is going to fly away with me!"

The doctor's glances were naturally directed toward his patient's nose. That object appeared sound, well, and fresh as a rose.

"It seems to me," said he, "we're getting along very well."

"I? undoubtedly; but these cursed spectacles won't get along at all."

He told his story, and M. Bernier was plunged in reflection.

"The Auvergnat is in the case somewhere. Have you any of the broken mountings here?"

"There's one under my feet."

Mr. Bernier gathered it up, examined it with a magnifying-glass, and thought that the gold appeared silvered about the place where it was broken.

"The devil! has Romagné been up to any nonsense?" he said.

"What sort of nonsense do you suppose he has been at?"

"He's always with you?"

"No; the monkey has left me; he's at work in the city."

"I hope you've kept his address this time."

"Of course. Would you like to see him?"

"The sooner, the better."

"Something dangerous about the place, then? Nevertheless I'm very well myself."

"Let's go and see Romagné at once."

A quarter of an hour afterwards, the gentlemen alighted at the door of Messieurs *Taillade et Cie., Rue de Sèvres.* A large sign cut out of pieces of glass indicated the kind of business carried on in the establishment.

"Here we are," said the notary.

"What! Your man is employed in there, then?"

"Certainly; I got him the place."

"Very well; there's less harm done than I thought; but nevertheless you have been guilty of a great imprudence."

"What are you driving at?"

"Let's go in first."

The first individual that they encountered in the work-shop was the Auvergnat, with his shirt-sleeves rolled up, silvering a glass.

"There!" said the doctor, "I foresaw it clearly."

"But what?"

"They silver these glasses with a film of mercury, fastened under tin-foil; do you understand?"

"Not yet."

"That animal of yours is steeped in it up to his elbows—what did I say? why, he's covered with it up to his armpits!"

"I don't see the connection."

"You don't see, that your nose being a portion of his arm, and gold having a deplorable affinity for mercury, it will be always impossible for you to protect your spectacles."

"*Sapristi!*"

"But you've the choice of wearing steel spectacles."

"I don't like them."

"Well, as matters stand, you risk nothing but a few mercurial accidents."

"Ah! but no; I'd rather have Romagné do something else. Here! Romagné, stop work and come away with us. Won't you ever get through, you brute? you don't know what you're exposing me to."

The proprietor of the shop had run up on hearing the noise. M. l'Ambert gave his name in an important tone, and reminded him that he had recommended this man, through his own upholsterer. M. Taillade answered that he remembered it perfectly; that it was for the sake of making himself agreeable to M. l'Ambert, and to merit his good-will, that he had promoted his laborer to silvering glasses.

"A fortnight ago?" queried l'Ambert.

"Yes, monsieur; you knew it, then?"

"I knew it too well; ah! monsieur, how anybody can play with such sacred things!"

"I have—?"

"No, nothing. But in my interest, in yours, in the interest of all society, put him where he was;—or rather, no—give him to me, so that I can take him away. I'll pay whatever is right. But time presses. Doctor's orders! Romagné, my friend, you must follow me. Your fortune is made. Everything that I have is yours—No? But come just the same; I assure you that I will satisfy you."

He scarcely left him time to dress himself, and rushed off with him like a beast of prey. M. Taillade and his workmen took him for a crazy man. Romagné, poor fellow, raised his eyes to heaven and asked himself, as they went along, what more they could want with him.

His destiny was discussed in the car-

riage while he chatted with the coachman.

"My dear patient," said the doctor to the millionnaire, "we must keep sight of this fellow. I understand why you sent him away, for he's not particularly agreeable company. But there's no use in sending him so far, nor in waiting so long without hearing from him. Settle him in the *Rue de Beaune*, or the *Rue de l'Université*, near your house. Give him a business less dangerous to you; or rather, if you feel like it, give him a little pension, without putting him at anything. If he works, he tires himself and exposes himself. I don't know any industry in which a man doesn't risk his skin. Accidents come so suddenly. Give him enough to live on without doing anything. Nevertheless be particularly careful not to put him too much at his ease. He'll take to drink again; and you know what will happen to you. A hun-

dred francs a month, and his rent free. That'll be about enough."

"Perhaps it's too much; not as far as the expense is concerned, but I'd like to give him enough to eat, without giving him anything to drink."

"Well, then, try four louis, payable in four instalments; say every Tuesday."

Romagné was offered a pension of eighty francs a month. But at first he was reluctant.

"Ish that all?" he said with scorn, "It washn't worth while to take me out of the *Rue de Shèvres*; I had three francsh ten shoush a day; and I shent money to my family; let me work among the glashesh, or gib me three francsh ten shoush."

It was absolutely necessary to go that high, for he was master of the situation.

M. l'Ambert soon perceived that he had done a wise thing. The year rolled round

without accident of any kind. Romagné was paid every week and watched every day. He lived honestly and peacefully, without any other passion than playing skittles. And Mlle. Irma Steimbourg's fine eyes reposed with visible complaisance on the pink and white nose of the happy millionnaire.

These two young people were partners in every german that winter; and so society married them. One evening, coming out of the *Théâtre Italien*, old Marquis de Villemaurin stopped l'Ambert on the threshold.

"Well," said he, "when is the wedding to be?"

"But, *M. le Marquis*, I've not heard anything about one yet."

"Are you going to wait, then, until some one asks you in marriage? It's the man's part to speak. *Morbleu!* Little Duke de Lignant, a perfect gentle-

man, and a good fellow, didn't wait for me to offer him my daughter; not he; he came, I liked him, and the thing was done. To-day week we sign the contract. You know, my dear boy, that the business side of the affair is for you to attend to. Let me put these ladies in the carriage, and we'll walk to the square and have a talk. But why the devil don't you put on your hat? I didn't notice you were holding it in your hand. Ten chances to one you've caught cold!"

The old man and the young one sauntered along side by side, to the Boulevard, one talking and the other listening. And M. l'Ambert went back home to prepare the marriage contract of Mlle. Charlotte Auguste de Villemaurin. But he had caught a horrible cold, there was no doubt of that.

The instrument was sketched out by the head clerk, revised by the business men of

the two *fiancés*, and finally engrossed on a beautiful piece of stamped paper, to which only the signatures were lacking.

On the appointed day, M. l'Ambert, a slave to duty, went himself to the *Hotel de Villemaurin*, in spite of a persistent influenza which nearly drove the eyes out of his head. In the ante-chamber, he made a final application of his handkerchief, and the lackeys trembled on their benches as if they had heard the trumpet of the last judgment.

M. l'Ambert was announced. He had on his spectacles, and smiled gravely, as was his custom under similar circumstances.

With a perfectly tied cravat, neatly gloved, shod in pumps as if for a ball, his crush hat under his left arm, the contract in his right hand, he went to pay his respects to the marchioness. Modestly in-

sinuating himself through the group by which she was surrounded, he said to her:

"Madame la Marquishe, I hab brought Mademoishellesh contract."

The Marquise de Villemaurin raised her beautiful eyes in astonishment. A slight murmur ran round the bystanders. M. l'Ambert bowed again, and resumed:

"*Shaprishti!* Madame la Marquishe, it ish a lobely day for the young woman."

A hand seized him by the left arm, and made him turn round. In this performance he recognized the strength of the Marquis.

"My dear notary," said the old gentleman, leading him to a corner, "the carnival certainly does permit a good many things; but remember where you are, and change your tone, if you please."

"But Moshoo le Marquish—"

"Again! you see that I'm patient:

don't abuse it. Go and make your excuses to the Marquise, read your contract to us, and then good-night."

"Why egscushesh? Why good-night? You sheem to think I'b been doing shomething shtupid. Goodnesh gracioush!"

The Marquis made no reply, but made a sign to the servants who were moving about the parlor. The outer door was opened, and a voice was heard calling in the hall:

"M. l'Ambert's carriage!"

Astonished, confused, half out of his mind, the poor notary went out, bowing, and soon found himself in his carriage, without knowing why or how. He rubbed his forehead, tore his hair, and pinched his arm, to wake himself up, thinking it likely that he had been the victim of a bad dream. But no; he was not sleeping. He looked at his watch, read the names of the streets by the lamps, and recognized the

shops. What had he said, what had he done, what propriety had he offended? what awkwardness, what folly had brought such treatment upon him? For there was certainly no room for doubt, he had been put out of M. de Villemaurin's door; and the marriage contract was there in his hand—the contract gotten up with so much care, in such good style, and which nobody had heard read!

He was in the court-yard of his own house before finding any solution to the problem. The appearance of his concierge inspired him with a brilliant idea.

"Shinguet!" he cried.

The little emaciated Singuet ran up.

"Shinguet, a hundred francsh for you, if you'll shinsherely tell me the truth; and a hundred kicksh if you consheal anything."

Singuet looked at him with surprise and smiled timidly.

"You shcoundrel! you heartlesh rashcal! why are you shmiling? Ansher me at onche!"

"My God! Monsieur," said the poor devil; "if you'll permit me—Monsieur must excuse me—but Monsieur imitates Romagné's accent so well."

"Romagné's acshent! I! I shpeak like Romagné! like an Oubregnat?"

"Monsieur understands it exactly; it has been just so for a week!"

"It can't be! Goodnesh gracioush! I didn't knoo it!"

Singuet raised his eyes to heaven, and thought his master had gone crazy. M. l'Ambert, aside from this cursed accent, was in full possession of all his faculties. He questioned his people one after another, and was satisfied with regard to his misfortune.

"Ah! that rashcally wooter-carrier!" he cried. "I'm sure he hash been up to

shome nonshensh! Let shome one find him! No; never mind; I'll go sheek him myshelf!"

He hurried off on foot to his pensioner, climbed the five pairs of stairs, rapped without waking him, got angry, and in despair kicked the door in.

"Moshoo l'Ambert!" cried Romagné.

"You rashcal ob an Oubregnat!" responded the notary.

"Gracioush goodnesh!"

"Goodnesh gracioush!"

The two seemed doing their best to tear the language to pieces. Their discussion lasted a good quarter of an hour, in the purest Auvergnese, without clearing up the mystery. The one complained bitterly as a victim, and the other defended himself eloquently as an innocent man.

"You shtop here for me!" said M. l'Ambert at length; "M. Bernier, the

doctor, will tell me thish very night what shtuff you hab been up to."

He woke M. Bernier, and told him, in the style which you have already been made acquainted with, how he had spent his evening. The doctor gave a laugh, and said:

"Here's a good deal of fuss over a trifle! Romagné is innocent; you have nobody to blame but yourself. There you stood, with your head bare, going out of the theatre. All the trouble comes from that. You got a cold in your head, therefore you speak through your nose, therefore you speak like an Auvergnat. That's logic. Go home, inhale a little aconite; keep your feet warm and your head cool; take the usual precautions against influenza, for now you know how much depends on your nose!"

The unfortunate man returned to his hotel, cursing like a good fellow.

"Sho," said he aloud, "my precautionsh are uselesh. I hab been careful in lodging, feeding, and watching thish raschally wooter-carrier, and he'sh alwaysh playing me tricksh; and I shall alwaysh be hish bictim without being able to accushe him ob anything. Then why should I shpend sho much money. Blessh me! Sho much the better; I'll shave hish pension."

No sooner said than done. The next day, Romagné, still half frightened out of his wits, came to get his weekly stipend. Singuet met him at the door, and told him that there was nothing more there for him. He philosophically shrugged his shoulders like a man who, without having read the epistles of Horace, instinctively practised the "*Nil admirari.*" Singuet, who wished him well, asked him what he was going to do. He answered that he was going to look for work. It was just as well; for this forced indolence had

borne very heavily on him for a long time.

M. l'Ambert cured his influenza, and congratulated himself upon having wiped out from his accounts the item "Romagné." No further accident came to interrupt the course of his happiness. He made peace with the Marquis de Villemaurin, and with all his patrons in the Faubourg, whom he had scandalized a little. Thus delivered from all care, he could unrestrainedly give himself up to the sweet inclination which drew him toward the dowry of Mlle. Steimbourg. Happy l'Ambert! He poured forth his heart, and displayed the chaste and eminently proper sentiments with which it was filled. The beautiful and discreet girl gave him her hand in the English fashion, and said:

"Done! My parents agree with me. I'll give you my instructions for the wedding-presents. Let's hurry up, and get

through the formalities, so we can go to Italy before the end of the winter."

Love lent him wings. He bought the wedding presents without any haggling, delivered over the apartment of "Madame" to the upholsterers, ordered a new carriage, chose two chestnut horses of the rarest beauty, and hurried the publication of the bans. The parting dinner which he gave to his friends is inscribed among the records of the *Café Anglais*. His mistresses received his farewells and his bracelets with restrained emotion.

The cards of invitation announced that the ceremony would take place at the church of *Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, on the third of March, at one o'clock precisely. It is unnecessary to say that the high altar had been engaged and all the *mise en scène* of first-class marriages.

On the third of March, at eight o'clock in the morning, M. l'Ambert woke up with-

out being called smiled at the first rays of a beautiful day, took his handkerchief from under his pillow, and carried it to his nose so as to clear up his ideas. But his nose was no longer there, and the cambric handkerchief covered nothing but an empty void.

With a bound, the notary was before the mirror. Horror and malediction! (As they say in romances of the old school.) He saw himself as badly disfigured as he was when he returned from Parthenay. To run to his bed, and pull over sheets and coverings, look between the bed and the wall, explore the mattress and paliaster, shake the furniture standing near, and turn the whole room topsy-turvy, took him but two minutes.

Nothing! Nothing! Nothing!

He hung on to the bell-pull, called his servants to the rescue, and swore that he would drive them off, like so many dogs, if his nose were not found. Fruitless men-

ace! the nose was as hard to find as the Chamber of Deputies in 1816.

Two hours were passed in agitation, disorder, and noise. Meanwhile, Steimbourg the elder put on his blue coat with gold buttons; Madame Steimbourg, in festive array, superintended two chambermaids and three hair-dressers, going, coming, and marching around the beautiful Irma. The pale bride, covered with rice powder, like a doughnut before frying, tapped her foot with impatience, and scolded everybody with admirable impartiality. The mayor of the tenth *arrondissement*, gotten up in his red scarf, walked up and down a great empty *salon*, preparing a little impromptu speech. The privileged mendicants of the church of *Saint Thomas d'Aquin* gave chase to two or three intruders who had come from no one knows where to dispute with them the handsome alms they expected. And M.

Henri Steimbourg, who had been for half an hour chewing a cigar in his father's smoking-room, was astonished that his dear Alfred had not yet made his appearance.

At last he lost patience, ran to the *Rue de Sartine*, and found his future brother-in-law in despair and tears. What could he say to console him under such a misfortune? He walked around him a long time, simply repeating the word "*Sacre-bleu!*" He made him relate the fatal circumstance a second time, and interlarded the conversation with several philosophic sentences.

And that pretty thoroughly cursed doctor, who did not come! He had been sent for post-haste. They had sought him at his house, at the hospital, everywhere. He arrived after a while, and understood at the first glance that Romagné was dead.

"I don't doubt it," said the notary, with a fresh accession of tears. "That rascally brute of a Romagné!"

Which was the funeral sermon of the unlucky Auvergnat.

"And now, Doctor, what are we to do?"

"We can get a new Romagné and begin the experiment over again; but you have experienced the inconveniences of this system, and if you take my advice you will go back to the Indian method."

"Skin from my forehead? Never! I'd rather have a silver nose."

"They make very elegant ones now," said the doctor.

"But still the question is, whether Mlle. Irma Steimbourg would consent to marry a man with a silver nose. Henri, my dear old fellow! what do you think about it?"

Henri Steimbourg hung his head, and made no reply. He went to tell the news

to his family and to take Mlle. Irma's orders. That amiable lady had an access of heroism when she learned the misfortune of her betrothed.

"Do you think, then," she cried, "that I marry him for his looks? If that were the case, I should have taken my cousin Roderigue, the clerk in the foreign office.[9] Roderigue was not so rich, but a great deal handsomer than he. I have given my hand to M. l'Ambert because he is an elegant gentleman, of admirable social position; because his character, his horses, his disposition, his tailor, in fact, everything about him, delights and enchants me. Moreover, I'm ready dressed, and an interruption to this marriage would injure my reputation. Let's hasten to him, mother; I'll take him as he is."

But when she was in the presence of the mutilated man, this fine enthusiasm did not hold out. She fainted. She was brought

to, but only to burst into tears. Amid her sobs was heard a cry which seemed to burst from her very soul:

"O, Roderigue! I've been very unjust to you!"

M. l'Ambert remained a bachelor. He had himself a nose made of enamelled silver, and transferred his practice to his head clerk. A modest little house was for sale near the *Invalides*. He bought it. A few friends—good livers—brightened up his retreat. He got together a choice wine-cellar, and consoled himself as well as he could. The finest bottles of Château-Yquem, the best years of Clos-Vougeot, were his. He sometimes said jokingly:

"I've the advantage of other men: I can drink all I want, without giving myself a red nose."

He remains faithful to his political convictions, reads good papers, and prays for

the success of the Count de Chambord. But he does not send him any money. The pleasure of handling his gold brings him a sweet intoxication. He passes his life between two wines and two millions.

One evening last week, as he was sauntering leisurely, cane in hand, along the *Rue Eblé*, he uttered a cry of surprise. Romagné's ghost, dressed in blue velveteen, rose before him!

Was it really a ghost? Ghosts do not carry anything, and this one was carrying a trunk with a shoulder-strap.

"Romagné!" cried the notary.

The other raised his eyes, and answered in his heavy and tranquil voice:

"Good-ebening, Moshoo l'Ambert."

"You speak! You are alive, then!"

"Shertainly I'm alibe."

"You wretch! what have you done with my nose?"

As he spoke, he seized him by the col-

lar and shook him. The Auvergnat disengaged himself with some difficulty, and replied:

"Shtop! leabe me alone; I can't take up for myshelf. Blessh me! you shee I only hab one arm. When you shtopped my money, I found a plashe at a machinisht's, and got my arm shmashed between shome wheelsh!"

UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

I.

I AM sure that you have passed Doctor Auvray's house twenty times without supposing that miracles are performed there. It is a modest-looking house, without any display or any sign: it does not even bear on its door the unattractive inscription—*Maison de santé.* It is situated near the end of the *Avenue Montaigne,* between Prince Soltikoff's gothic palace and the great Triat's gymnasium where they regenerate mankind on the trapèze. A gate, painted in imitation of bronze, opens upon a little garden of lilacs and roses. The porter's lodge is at the right; the building

at the left contains the doctor's rooms, and those of his wife and daughter. The principal building is at the remote end: it turns its back upon the avenue, and opens all its windows to the south-east on a little park, well planted with chestnuts and lindens. There the doctor cares for, and often cures, people who have lost their minds. I would not take you into his establishment, if you ran any risk of meeting all kinds of insanity; but do not be afraid; you will not have the distressing spectacle of imbecility, paralytic insanity, or even utter loss of intelligence. M. Auvray has created for himself what is called a specialty; he treats monomania. He is an excellent man, full of intelligence and learning: a real philosopher and pupil of Esquirol and Laromiguière. If you were ever to meet him, with his bald head, well-shaven chin, black vestments, and placid face, you would not know whether

he were doctor, professor, or priest. When he opens his heavy eyes, you expect him to say: "My child!" His eyes are not ugly, considering how they protrude, and they throw around him glances comprehensive, limpid, and serene, beneath which you see a world of kindly thoughts. Those large eyes are the open doors of a beautiful soul. M. Auvray's vocation was decided when he was at the medical school. He gave himself up passionately to the study of monomania—that curious disturbance of the faculties which is seldom due to a physical cause, which does not answer to any perceptible lesion in the nervous system, and which is cured by moral treatment. He was seconded in his observations by a young female superintendent of one of the wards, who was quite pretty and very well educated. He fell in love with her, and as soon as he got his degree, married her. It was a modest en-

trance upon life. Nevertheless, he had a little property which he devoted to founding the establishment you know. With a touch of charlatanism, he could have made a fortune; he was satisfied to make his expenses. He avoided notoriety, and whenever he attained a marvellous cure, he did not proclaim it from the housetops. His reputation made itself, and almost in spite of him. His treatise on *Monomanie raisonnante*, which he published through Bailliére in 1842, is in its sixth edition without the author having sent a single copy to the papers. Modesty is certainly good in itself, but it ought not to be carried to an extreme. Mlle. Auvray has not more than twenty thousand francs dowry, and she will be twenty-two years old in April.

About a fortnight ago (it was, I think, on Wednesday, December 13th), a cab stopped before M. Auvray's gate. The driver rang, and the gate was opened.

The carriage went on to the doctor's house, and two men briskly entered his office. The servant begged them to sit down and wait till the doctor had finished his rounds. It was ten o'clock in the morning.

One of the strangers was a man of fifty, large, brown, full-blooded, of high color, passably ugly and specially ill-made; his ears were pierced, his hands large, and his thumbs enormous. Fancy a workman dressed in his employer's clothes: such is M. Morlot.

His nephew, François Thomas, is a young man of twenty-three, hard to describe, because he is just like everybody else. He is neither large nor small, handsome nor ugly, developed like a Hercules nor spindled like a dandy, but, maintaining the happy medium throughout, unobtrusive from head to foot, hair of no particular color, and mind and clothes of

the same. When he entered M. Auvray's house, he seemed very much agitated; he walked up and down apparently in a rage, would not keep still anywhere, looked at twenty things at once, and would have handled them all if his hands had not been tied.

"Calm yourself," said his uncle; "what I'm doing is for your good. You'll be happy here, and the doctor will cure you."

"I'm not sick. Why have you tied me?"

"Because you would have thrown me out of the carriage. You're not in your right mind, my poor François; M. Auvray will restore you."

"I reason as clearly as you do, uncle, and I don't know what you're talking about. My mind is clear, my judgment sound, and my memory excellent. Would you like me to repeat some verses? Shall

I translate some Latin? Here's a Tacitus in this bookcase. . . . If you would prefer a different experiment, I can solve a problem in Arithmetic or Geometry. . . . You don't care to have me? Very well! Listen to what we have done this morning:

"You came in at eight o'clock, not to wake me, for I was not asleep, but to get me out of bed. I dressed myself, without Germain's help; you asked me to go with you to Dr. Auvray's; I refused; you insisted; I got angry; Germain helped you to tie my hands; I'll discharge him to-night. I owe him thirteen days' wages: that is thirteen francs, as I engaged him at thirty francs a month. You owe him damages: you are the cause of his losing his Christmas-gift. Is this reasoning? And do you still think you can make me out crazy? Ah! my dear uncle, take a better view of things! Remember that my mother was

your sister! What would she say—my poor mother!—if she were to see me here. I bear you no ill will, and everything can be arranged pleasantly. You have a daughter, Mlle. Claire Morlot . . "

"Ah! there I have you! You see clearly enough that you are out of your head. I have a daughter? I? But I'm a bachelor. A confirmed bachelor!"

"You have a daughter," replied François, mechanically.

"My poor nephew! Let us see. Listen to me carefully. Have you a cousin?"

"A cousin? No. I have no cousin. Oh! you won't find me out of my reckoning; I have no cousins of either sex."

"I am your uncle; isn't that so?"

"Yes, you are my uncle, although you forgot it this morning."

"If I had a daughter she would be your cousin; now you have no cousin, therefore I have no daughter."

"You're right. I had the happiness of seeing her this summer at Ems Springs, with her mother. I love her; I have reason to think that I am not indifferent to her, and I have the honor to ask you for her hand."

"Whose hand?"

"Mademoiselle's hand—your daughter's."

"Well, so be it," thought M. Morlot; "M. Auvray will be very skilful if he cures him. I will pay six thousand francs board from my nephew's income. Six from thirty, leaves twenty-four. I shall be rich. Poor François!"

He seated himself and casually opened a book. "Sit down there," he said to the young man; "I'll read you something. Try to listen: it will calm you down." He read:

"Monomania is the persistence of one idea, the exclusive domination of a single

passion. Its seat is in the heart; there it must be sought and there it must be cured. Its cause is love, fear, vanity, ambition, remorse. It displays itself by the same symptoms as passion generally; sometimes by joy, gayety, daring, and noise; sometimes by timidity, sadness, and silence."

During the reading, François seemed to grow quiet and drop asleep. "Bravo!" thought M. Morlot. "Here's a miracle performed by medicine already: it puts a man to sleep who has been neither hungry nor drowsy." François was not asleep, but he played possum to perfection. He nodded at proper intervals, and regulated the heavy monotone of his breathing with mathematical accuracy. Uncle Morlot was taken in: he continued reading in a subdued voice, then yawned, then stopped reading, then let his book slip down, then shut his eyes, and then went sound asleep, much to the satisfaction of his nephew,

who watched him maliciously out of the corner of his eye.

Francois began by moving his chair: M. Morlot budged no more than a tree. François walked about the room, making his shoes creak on the inlaid floor: M. Morlot began snoring. Then the crazy man went to the writing table, found an eraser, pushed it into a corner, fixed it firmly by the handle and cut the cord which bound his arms. He freed himself, recovered the use of his hands, repressed a cry of joy, and stealthily approached his uncle. In two minutes M. Morlot was firmly bound, but with so much delicacy that his sleep was not even troubled.

François admired his work, and picked up the book which had slipped to the floor. It was the last edition of the *Monomanie raissonnante.* He took it into a corner, and set to reading like a bookworm, while he awaited the doctor's arrival.

II.

It now becomes necessary for me to recount the antecedents of François and his uncle. François was the son of a late toy dealer in the *Passage du Saumon*, named M. Thomas. Toy-selling is a good business; a hundred per cent. is cleared on almost every article. Since his father's death, François had enjoyed a competence of the degree called "honorable," undoubtedly because it obviates the necessity of doing dishonorable things; perhaps, too, because it makes practicable the doing of the honors to one's friends: he had thirty thousand francs income.

His tastes were extremely simple, as I think I have told you. He had an innate preference for things which are not glaring, and naturally selected his gloves, vests,

and coats from the series of modest colors lying between black and brown. He did not remember having dreamed of plumes, even in his tenderest childhood, and the ribbons most desired had never troubled his sleep. He never carried an opera-glass, because, he said, his eyes were good; nor wore a scarf-pin, because his scarf would keep in place without a pin; but the real reason was that he was afraid of attracting attention. The very polish of his boots dazzled him. He would have been doomed to wretchedness if the accident of birth had afflicted him with a noticeable name. If, for the sake of giving him one, his sponsors had called him Americ or Fernand, he would never have signed it in his life. Happily, his names were as unobtrusive as if he had chosen them himself.

His timidity prevented him from entering upon any career. After crossing the

threshold of his baccalaureate, he stopped by that great door which opens upon everything, and stood rapt in contemplation before the seven or eight roads which were lying before him. The bar seemed to him too boisterous, medicine too devoid of rest, a tutorship too arrogant, commerce too complicated, the civil-service too constraining.

As to the army, it was useless to think of that: not that he was afraid to fight, but he trembled at the idea of wearing a uniform. He remained, then, in his original way of life, not because it was the easiest, but because it was the most obscure: he lived on his income.

As he had not earned his money himself, he lent it freely. In return for so rare a virtue, Heaven gave him plenty of friends. He loved them all sincerely, and acceded to their wishes with very good grace. When he met one of them on the Boule-

vard, he was always the one to be taken by the arm, turned about, and taken where his friend desired. Don't think that he was either foolish, shallow, or ignorant. He knew three or four modern languages, Latin, Greek, and everything else usually learned at college; he had some ideas of commerce, manufactures, agriculture, and literature, and he estimated a new book well, if there was nobody near to listen to his opinion.

But it was among women that his weakness showed itself in its full strength. It was a necessity of his nature always to be in love with somebody, and if in rubbing his eyes in the morning he saw no gleam of love on the horizon, he got up out of sorts and infallibly put his stockings on wrong side out. Whenever he was at a concert or a play, he began by searching among the audience for some face that pleased him, and was in love with it the

whole evening. If he found one to suit him, the play was fine, the concert delicious; otherwise, everybody played badly or sang false. His heart so abhorred a vacuum, that in presence of a mediocre beauty it spurred him to believe her perfect. You will realize without my help, that this universal susceptibility was by no means licentiousness, but innocence. He loved all women without telling them so, for he had never dared to speak to one. He was the most candid and inoffensive of roués; Don Juan, if you please, but before Donna Julia.

When he was in love, he rehearsed to himself courageous declarations, which regularly died upon his lips. He paid his court; laid open the very bottom of his soul; held long conversations and charming dialogues, in which he made both the questions and replies. He made appeals energetic enough to soften rocks, and warm enough to melt ice; but no woman

was drawn towards him by his mute aspirations: one must *want*, to be loved. There is a great difference between desiring and wanting; desiring floats easily upon the clouds: wanting runs on foot among the flints. One watches for every chance, the other demands nothing but its own existence; wanting marches straight to its point over hedges and ditches, ravines and mountains; desiring remains seated at home and cries in its sweetest voice:

"*Clocher, clocher, arrive, ou je suis mort!*" [10]

Nevertheless, in the August of this very year, four months before pinioning his uncle's arms, François had dared to love face to face. At the Ems Springs, he had met a young girl almost as shy as himself, whose shuddering timidity had given him courage. She was a Parisienne, frail and delicate as fruit grown on the shady side of a wall: transparent as those lovely children whose blue blood can be seen

distinctly under their skin. She accompanied her mother, whom an inveterate disorder (a chronic trouble of the throat, if I am not mistaken) obliged to take the waters. Mother and daughter must have lived apart from the world, for they regarded the boisterous crowd of bathers with long looks of astonishment. François was casually presented to them by one of his friends, who had become cured and was going to Italy through Germany. He attended them assiduously for a month, and was virtually their only companion. For sensitive souls, the crowd is a vast solitude; the more noise the world makes around them, the more do they shrink into their corner to whisper into each other's ears. The young Parisienne and her mother went right into François' heart as naturally as from one room to the next, and found it pleasant there. Every day they discovered new treasures, like the

navigators who first set foot in America: they wandered with even fresh delights over this mysterious and virgin land. They never asked themselves if he were rich or poor; they were satisfied to know that he was good; and nothing they might find could be more precious to them than that heart of gold. On his side, François was inspired with his metamorphosis. Has any one ever told you how spring breaks upon the gardens in Russia? Yesterday the snow covered everything: to-day comes a ray of sunshine which puts winter to flight. At noon the trees burst their buds: by night they are covered with leaves: to-morrow they almost bear fruit. So did François' love bloom and bear its freight of promise. His coldness and constraint were carried away like icicles in a thaw; the shamefaced and pusillanimous boy, in a few weeks became a man. I do not know who first uttered the word *marriage*,

but what difference does it make? The word is always understood when two true hearts speak of love.

François was of age and his own master, but his beloved depended upon a father whose consent it was necessary to obtain. There the unfortunate youth's timidity mastered him again. It was well enough for Claire to say to him: "Write unhesitatingly; my father is already notified: you will receive his consent by return mail." He wrote and re-wrote this letter over a hundred times, without being able to make up his mind to send it. Nevertheless, it was an easy task, and the most ordinary intelligence would have performed it with credit. François knew the name, position, fortune, and even the temperament of his future father-in-law. They had let him into all the domestic secrets; he was almost one of the family. What was left for him to do? To state, in a few words,

what he was and what he had; the reply was not doubtful. He hesitated so long, that at the end of a month Claire and her mother were forced to entertain misgivings regarding him. I think they would have still been patient for a fortnight longer, but the paternal wisdom did not permit it. If Claire was in love, if her lover had not decided to make a formal declaration of his intentions, the thing to do was, without losing any time, to get the girl in a safe place in Paris. Possibly then M. François Thomas would make up his mind to ask her in marriage: he knew where to find her.

One day when François went to take the ladies out walking, the hotel-keeper told him that they had left for Paris. Their rooms were already occupied by an English family. Such a rude blow falling suddenly upon such a delicate head, destroyed his reason. He went out like an

idiot, and began looking for Claire in all the places where he had been used to taking her. He went to his lodgings with a violent pain in his head, which he treated God only knows how. He had himself bled, took boiling-hot baths, applied ferocious sinapisms, and in short revenged on his body the tortures of his soul. When he considered himself cured, he started for France, resolved to apply for Claire's hand before changing his coat. He hurried to Paris, sprang from the car, forgot his baggage, jumped into a cab, and cried to the driver:

"To *her*! Gallop!"

"Where to, Boss?"

"To Monsieur ———, *Rue* ———, I don't know any more." He had forgotten the name and address of the woman he loved. "Go ahead to my house; I'll find it again." He gave the coachman his card and was taken home.

His *concierge* was a childless old man named Emmanuel. On meeting him, François bowed low and said:

"Monsieur, you have a daughter, Mlle. Claire Emmanuel. I wanted to write you to ask for her hand; but I thought it would be better to make the request in person."

They realized that he was crazy, and ran to the *Faubourg St. Antoine* to find his Uncle Morlot.

Uncle Morlot was the most honest man in the *Rue de Charonne,* which is one of the longest streets in Paris. He made antique furniture with ordinary skill and extraordinary conscientiousness. It was not his way to represent stained pear-wood as ebony, or a cabinet of his own make as a mediæval piece! Nevertheless, he knew as well as anybody the art of cracking new wood and making it appear full of wormholes of which worms were entirely innocent. But it was his principle and his law

to wrong nobody. With a moderation almost absurd in the manufacture of articles of luxury, he limited his profits to five per cent. over and above the general expenses of his establishment: consequently he had gained more respect than money. When he made out a bill, he went over the addition three times, so fearful was he of misleading somebody to his own advantage.

After thirty years of this business, he was just about as rich as when he left his apprenticeship. He had made his living like the humblest of his employees, and he asked himself, with a touch of jealousy, how M. Thomas had managed to lay up money. His brother-in-law looked down on him a little, with the vanity characteristic of parvenus, but he looked down upon his brother more effectually, with the pride of a man who never cared to become a parvenu. He made a parade of his mediocrity, and said with plebeian self-conceit,

"At least I'm sure that I've nothing that belongs to anybody else."

Man is a strange animal: I am not the first who has said so. This excellent M. Morlot, whose hyper-scrupulous honesty amused the whole faubourg, felt an agreeable tickling at the bottom of his heart, when they came to tell him of his nephew's disorder. He heard an insinuating little voice saying to him, very low, "If François is insane, you'll be his guardian." Probity hastened to reply: "We won't be any richer."—"How?" answered the voice: "Certainly an insane man's board never costs thirty thousand francs a year. Moreover, we shall have all the trouble; we'll have to neglect our business; we deserve more compensation; we won't wrong anybody."—"But," replied Disinterestedness, "one ought to help his relations without charging them for it."—"Certainly," murmured the voice.—"Then why didn't our

family ever do anything for us?"—"Bah!" responded the goodness of his heart. "This won't amount to anything, anyway; it's only a false alarm. François will be well in a couple of days."—"Possibly, however," continued the obstinate voice, "the malady will kill the patient, and we'll inherit without wronging anybody. We've worked thirty years for the sovereign who reigns at Potsdam; " who knows but what a blow on a cracked head, may make our fortune?"

The good man stopped his ears; but his ears were so large, so ample, so nobly expanded, like a conch-shell, that the subtle and persevering little voice always slipped into them in spite of him. The establishment in the *Rue de Charonne* was left to the care of the foreman, and the uncle established his winter-quarters in his nephew's pretty rooms. He slept in a good bed, and liked it. He sat at an

excellent table, and the cramps in the stomach which he had complained of for many years, were cured by magic. He was waited upon, dressed, and shaved by Germain, and he got used to it. Little by little he consoled himself for seeing his nephew sick. He fell into the habit of thinking that perhaps François never would get well; nevertheless, he repeated to himself now and then, to keep his conscience easy, "I'm not injuring anybody."

At the end of three months, he got tired of having a crazy man in the house, for he began to feel as if he were at home there himself. François's perpetual drivelling, and his mania for asking Claire in marriage, came to be an intolerable burden to the old man: he resolved to clear the house and shut the sick man up at M. Auvray's. "After all," he said to himself, "my nephew will get better care

there, and I shall be more at ease. Science has recognized that it is well to give the insane change of scene to divert them: I'm doing my duty."

With such thoughts as these he went to sleep, when François took it into his head to tie his hands; what an awakening!

III.

THE doctor came in with apologies for keeping them waiting. François got up, put his hat on the table, and explained matters with great volubility, while striding up and down the room.

"Monsieur," said he, "this is my maternal uncle, whom I am about to confide to your care. You see in him a man of from forty-five to fifty, hardened to manual labor and the privations of a life of hard work; as to the rest, born of healthy parents, in a family where no case of mental aberration has ever been known. You will not, then, have to contend against an hereditary disorder. His trouble is one of the most curious monomanias which you ever had occasion to examine. He passes with inconceivable

rapidity from extreme gayety to extreme depression; it is a singular compound of monomania proper and melancholy."

"He has not entirely lost his reason?"

"No, monsieur, he's not absolutely demented; he's unsound on but one point, so he comes entirely within your specialty."

"What's the characteristic of his malady?"

"Alas, monsieur, the characteristic of our times—cupidity. The poor fellow is certainly the man of the period. After working from childhood, he finds himself poor. My father, starting where he did, left me considerable property. My uncle began by being jealous; then realizing that he was my only relation, and would be my heir in case of death, or my guardian in case of insanity, as a weak mind easily believes what it desires, the unhappy man persuaded himself that I had lost

my mind. He has told everybody so: will say the same to you. In the carriage, although his own hands were bound, he thought that it was he who was bringing me to you."

"When was the first attack?"

"About three months ago. He went down and said to my concierge, with a frightened air: 'Monsieur Emmanuel, you have a daughter; leave her in your lodge, and come and help me bind my nephew.'"

"Does he realize his condition? Does he know that he is not himself?"

"No, monsieur, and I think that's a good sign. I'll tell you, moreover, that he has some remarkable derangements of the vital functions, and especially of nutrition. He has entirely lost appetite, and is subject to long periods of sleeplessness."

"So much the better. A deranged person who sleeps and eats regularly is

almost incurable. Let me wake him up."

M. Auvray gently shook the shoulder of the sleeper, who sprang to his feet. His first movement was to rub his eyes. When he found his hands bound, he realized what had happened while he slept, and burst out laughing.

"That's a good joke!" he said.

François drew the doctor aside.

"You see! Well, in five minutes he will be raving."

"Leave him to me. I know how to take them." He approached his patient smiling as one does upon a child whom he wishes to amuse. "My friend," he said, "you woke up at the right time. Did you have pleasant dreams?"

"I? I've not been dreaming. I laughed at seeing myself tied up like a bundle of sticks. People would take me for the crazy one."

"There!" said François.

"Have the kindness to let me loose, doctor. I can explain matters better when I'm free."

"My child, I'm going to untie you; but you must promise to be very good."

"Why, monsieur, do you really take me for a madman?"

"No, my friend, but you're not well. We'll take care of you and cure you. Hold still. Now your hands are free. Don't abuse it."

"Why, what the devil do you suppose I'll do? I've brought you my nephew—"

"Very well," said M. Auvray, "we'll talk about that in good time. I found you asleep; do you often sleep in the daytime?"

"Never! This stupid book—"

"Oh! oh!" said the author, "the case is serious. And so you think your nephew is mad?"

"Mad enough to be tied up, monsieur; and the proof is, that I had fastened his hands together with this rope."

"But you're the one whose hands were tied. Don't you remember that I set you free?"

"It was I? It was he! But let me explain the whole affair."

"Tut, my friend, you're getting excited: you're very red in the face. I don't want you to tire yourself. Just be content to answer my questions. You say that your nephew is ill?"

"Crazy, crazy, crazy!"

"And you are satisfied to see him crazy?"

"I?"

"Answer me frankly. You're not anxious for him to get well: isn't that so?"

"Why?"

"So that his fortune can remain in your hands. You want to be rich. You don't

like having worked so long without making a fortune. You think it's your turn now?"

M. Morlot did not answer. He kept his eyes fixed on the floor. He asked himself if he were not having a bad dream, and tried to make out what was real in this experience of pinioned hands, cross-examinations, and questions from a stranger who read his conscience like an open book.

"Does he hear voices?" asked M. Auvray.

The poor uncle felt his hair stand on end. He remembered that persistent little voice which kept whispering in his ear, and he answered mechanically: "Sometimes."

"Ah! he has hallucinations?"

"No, no! I'm not ill; let me go. I'll lose my senses here. Ask all my friends; they'll tell you that I'm in full possession of my faculties. Feel my pulse; you'll see that I've no fever."

"Poor Uncle!" said François. "He doesn't know that insanity is madness without fever."

"Monsieur," added the doctor, "if we could only give our patients fever, we'd cure them all."

M. Morlot threw himself on the sofa; his nephew continued to pace the doctor's study.

"Monsieur," said François, "I am deeply afflicted by my uncle's misfortune, but it is a great consolation to be able to entrust him to such a man as yourself. I have read your admirable book on *La Monamanie raisonnante:* it is the most remarkable book that has been written on the subject, since the *Traite des Maladies mentales*, by the great Esquirol. I know, moreover, that you are a father to your patients, so I will not insult you by recommending M. Morlot to special care. As to the expense of his treatment, I leave

that entirely to you." He took a thousand-franc note from his pocket-book, and quietly laid it on the mantel. "I shall have the honor to present myself here in the course of next week. At what hour is access to the patients allowed?"

"From noon till two o'clock. As for me, I'm always at home. Good-day, monsieur."

"Stop him!" cried the poor uncle. "Don't let him go! He's the crazy one; I'll explain his madness!"

"Pray calm yourself, my dear uncle," said François going out; "I leave you in M. Auvray's hands; he'll take good care of you."

M. Morlot tried to follow his nephew. The doctor held him back.

"What awful luck!" cried the poor uncle. "He won't say a single crazy thing! If he would only lose his bearings

a little, you'd see well enough that it's not I who am crazy."

François already had hold of the door-knob. He turned on his heel, as if he had forgotten something: marched straight up to the doctor, and said to him:

"Monsieur, my uncle's illness is not the only motive which brought me here."

"Ah! ah!" murmured M. Morlot, who thought he saw a ray of hope.

The young man continued:

"You have a daughter."

"At last!" cried the poor uncle. "You'll bear witness that he said, 'You have a daughter!'"

The doctor replied to François: "Yes, Monsieur. Explain. . . ."

"You have a daughter, Mlle. Claire Auvray."

"There it is! There it is! I told you that very thing!"

"Yes, Monsieur," said the doctor.

"Three months since, she was at the Ems Springs with her mother."

"Bravo! bravo!" yelled M. Morlot.

"Yes, Monsieur," responded the doctor.

M. Morlot ran up to the doctor and said: "You're not the doctor! You're one of the patients!"

"My friend," replied the doctor, "if you don't behave yourself, we'll have to give you a shower-bath."

M. Morlot recoiled, frightened. His nephew continued:

"Monsieur, I love Mademoiselle—your daughter. I have some hope that I'm loved in return, and if her sentiments have not changed since September, I have the honor to ask you for her hand."

The doctor answered: "This is Monsieur François Thomas, then, with whom I've the honor of speaking?"

"The same, Monsieur, and I ought to have begun by telling you my name."

"Monsieur, permit me to tell you, that you've decidedly taken your own time."

At this moment, the doctor's attention was drawn to M. Morlot, who was rubbing his hands with a sort of passion.

"What's the matter with you, my friend?" he inquired in his sweet and paternal voice.

"Nothing! Nothing! I'm only rubbing my hands."

"But why?"

"There's something there that bothers me."

"Show it to me; I don't see anything."

"You don't see it? There, there, between the fingers. I see it plainly, I do!"

"What do you see?"

"My nephew's money. Take it away, doctor! I'm an honest man; I don't want anybody's property."

While the doctor was listening atten-

tively to these first aberrations of M. Morlot a strange revolution took place in the appearance of François. He grew pale and cold, his teeth chattered violently. M. Auvray turned towards him, to ask what had happened.

"Nothing," he replied. "She's coming. I hear her. This is joy . . . but it overcomes me. Happiness falls upon me like snow. The Winter will be hard for lovers. Doctor, see what's going on in my head."

M. Morlot ran to him saying:

"Enough! Don't be crazy any more! I no longer want you to be an idiot. People will say that I stole your wits. I'm honest, doctor; look at my hands; search my pockets; send to my house, *Rue de Charonne*, in the *Faubourg St. Antoine;* open all the drawers; you'll see that I've nothing that belongs to anybody else."

The doctor stood much perplexed be-

tween his two patients, when a door opened, and Claire came in to tell her father that breakfast was waiting.

François jumped up as if propelled by a spring, but only his wishes reached Mlle. Auvray. His body fell heavily on the sofa. He could scarcely murmur a few words.

"Claire! It is I. I love you. Will you? . . ."

He passed his hand over his brow. His pale face flushed violently. The temples throbbed fiercely, and he felt a heavy oppression over his eyelids. Claire, as near dead as alive, caught up his two hands. His skin was dry, and his pulse so hard that the poor girl was terrified. It was not thus that she had hoped to see him again. In a few minutes a yellowish tinge spread about his nostrils; then came nausea, and M. Auvray recognized all the symptoms of a bilious fever. "What a

misfortune," he said, "that this fever didn't come to his uncle; it would have cured him!"

He pulled the bell. The maid-servant ran in, and then Mme. Auvray, whom François scarcely recognized, so much was he overcome. The sick man had to be put to bed, and that without delay. Claire offered her chamber and her bed. It was a pretty little couch with white curtains; a tiny chamber and chastely attractive, upholstered in pink percale, and blooming with great bunches of heather, in azure vases. On the mantle appeared a large onyx cup. This was the only present which Claire had received from her lover. If you are taken with fever, dear reader, I wish you such a sick-room.

While they were giving the first cares to François, his uncle, beside himself, flurried around the chamber, getting into the

doctor's way, embracing the patient, seizing Mme. Auvray's hand, and crying in ear-splitting tones: "Cure him quick, quick! I don't want him to die; I won't permit his death; I've a right to oppose it; I'm his uncle and his guardian! If you don't cure him, they'll say I killed him. I want you all to bear witness, that I don't claim to be his heir. I'll give all his property to the poor. A glass of water, please, to wash my hands with."

They had to take him into the sick-wards of the establishment. There he raved so, that they had to put him in a strong canvas waistcoat laced up behind, with the sleeves sewed together at the ends: that is what they call a strait-jacket. The nurses took care of him.

Mme. Auvray and her daughter took devoted care of François, although the details of the treatment were not always the most agreeable; but the more delicate

sex takes naturally to heroism. You may say that the two ladies saw in their patient a son-in-law and a husband. But I think that if he had been a stranger, he would have scarcely lost anything. St. Vincent de Paul invented only a uniform, for in every woman, of any rank, or any age, exists the essential material of a sister of charity.

Seated night and day in this chamber, filled with fever, mother and daughter employed their moments of repose in telling over their souvenirs and their hopes. They could not explain François' long silence, his sudden return, or the circumstances that had led him to the *Avenue Montaigne.* If he loved Claire, why had he forced himself to wait three months? Did he need his uncle's illness to bring him to M. Auvray's? If his love had worn out, why did he not take his uncle to some other doctor? There are enough of

them in Paris. Possibly he had thought his passion cured until Claire's presence had undeceived him! But no, for before seeing her, he had asked her in marriage.

All these questions were answered by François in his delirium. Claire, hanging on his lips, eagerly took in his lightest words; she talked them over with her mother and the doctor, who was not long in getting at the truth. To a man accustomed to disentangle the most confused ideas, and to read the minds of the insane like a partly obliterated page, the wanderings of fever are an intelligible language, and the most confused delirium is not without its lights. They soon knew that he had lost his reason, and under what circumstances, and they even made out how he had been the innocent cause of his uncle's malady.

Then began a new series of misgivings

for Mlle. Auvray. François had been insane. Would the terrible crisis which she had unwittingly brought on, cure him? The doctor assured her that fever had the privilege of indicating the exact nature of mental disturbance: that is to say, of curing it. Nevertheless, there is no rule without exceptions, especially in medicine. Suppose he were to get well, would there be no fear of relapses? Would M. Auvray give his daughter to one of his patients?

"As for me," said Claire, sadly smiling, "I'm not afraid of anything: I would risk it. I'm the cause of his sufferings; ought not I to console him? After all, his insanity is restricted to asking for my hand: he'll have no more occasion to ask it when I'm his wife; then we'll not have anything to fear. The poor child is sick only from excess of love; cure it, dear father, but not too thoroughly. I

want him always to be mad enough to love me as I love him."

"We'll see," responded M. Auvray. "Wait till the fever is past. If he's ashamed of having been ill, if I find him sad or melancholy when he gets well, I can't answer for anything. If, on the other hand, he looks back upon his disorder without shame or regret, if he speaks of it resignedly, if he meets the people who have been taking care of him without repugnance, I can laugh at the idea of relapses."

"Ah, father, why should he be ashamed of having loved to excess? It is a noble and generous madness which never enters petty souls. And how can he feel repugnance on meeting those who have nursed him? For they are we!"

After six days of delirium, an abundant perspiration carried off the fever, and the patient began to convalesce. When he

found himself in a strange room, between Mme. and Mlle. Auvray, his first idea was that he was still at the hotel of the *Quatre Saisons*, in the principal street of Ems. His feebleness, his emaciation, and the presence of the doctor, led him to other thoughts; he had his memory, but vaguely. The doctor came to his aid. He opened the truth to him cautiously, as they measure out food for a body enfeebled by fasting. François commenced by listening to his own story as to a romance in which he had not played any part; he was another man, an entirely new man, and he came out of the fever as out of a tomb. Little by little the gaps in his memory closed up. His brain seemed full of empty places, which filled up one by one without any sudden jars. Very soon he was quite master of himself, and fully conscious of the past. The cure was a work of science, but, above all, of pa-

tience. It is in such particulars that the paternal treatment of M. Auvray is so much admired. That excellent man had a genius for gentleness. On the 25th of December, François, seated on the side of his bed, and ballasted with some chicken-soup and half the yolk of an egg, told, without any interruption, trouble, or wandering, without any feeling of shame or regret, and without any other emotion than a tranquil joy, the occurrences of the three months which had just passed. Claire and Mme. Auvray wept while they listened. The doctor acted as if he were taking notes or writing from dictation, but something else than ink fell upon the paper. When the tale was told, the convalescent added, by way of conclusion :

" To-day, the 25th of December, at three o'clock in the afternoon, I said to my excellent doctor, to my beloved father, M. Auvray, whose street and number I

shall never forget again, 'Monsieur, you have a daughter, Mlle. Claire Auvray; I saw her last summer at the Ems Springs with her mother; I love her; she has given me abundant proof that she loves me, and if you are not afraid that I will get sick again, I have the honor to ask you for her hand.'"

The doctor only made a little motion of the head, but Claire passed her arm around the convalescent's neck, and kissed him on the forehead. I care for no other reply when I make a similar demand.

The same day, M. Morlot, calmer and freed from the strait-jacket, got up at eight in the morning. On getting out of bed, he took his slippers, turned them over and over, shook them carefully, and passed them to the nurse, begging him to see if they did not contain thirty thousand francs income. Not till then would he consent to put them on. He combed him-

self for a good quarter of an hour, repeating, "I don't want anybody to say that my nephew's fortune has got into my head." He shook each of his garments out of the window, after examining it down to its smallest wrinkle. As soon as he was dressed, he asked for a pencil, and wrote on the walls of his chamber:

"COVET NOT THAT WHICH IS ANOTHER'S."

Then he commenced to rub his hands with incredible energy, to satisfy himself that François' fortune was not sticking to them. He scraped his fingers with his pencil, counting them from one up to ten, for fear that he should forget one. He thought he was in a police-court, and earnestly demanded to be searched. The doctor got him to recognize him, and told him that François was cured. The poor man asked if the money had been found.

"As my nephew is going to leave here," he said, "he'll need his money; where is it? I haven't got it, unless it's in my bed." And before anyone had time to prevent him, he pulled his bed topsy-turvy. The doctor went out after pressing his hand. He rubbed this hand with scrupulous care. They brought him his breakfast; he commenced by examining his napkin, his glass, his knife, his plate, repeating that he did not want to eat up his nephew's fortune. The repast over, he washed his hands in enormous quantities of water. "The fork is silver," said he; "perhaps there's some silver sticking to my hands!"

M. Auvray does not despair of saving him, but it will take time. Summer and Autumn are the seasons in which doctors are most successful with insanity.

THE END.

NOTES.

[1] (p. 1). The French call a notary *Maitre* (Master), much as we call a minor legal functionary "Squire." The French name is retained for the sake of the local color.

[2] (p. 4). L'Ambert—Ambert with the prefix le which, like the prefix de, is indicative of nobility.

[3] (p. 7). About's word.

[4] (p. 8). *i. e.* "subject" to the wishes of some gentleman, or, perhaps, equivalent to our term "a case," in the sense of "a hard case." The equivalent of hard case in French is *mauvais sujet*—bad subject.

[5] (p. 71). The *Hotel Dieu* (House of God), a leading hospital in Paris.

[6] (p. 72). Operative (Practical) Surgery.

[7] (p. 89). A licensed public man-of-all-work, who regularly waits at the street corners of Paris for odd jobs.

[8] (p. 89). Events in the story absolutely require that traces of the Auvergnese pronunciation should be retained, but the reader who may be ambitious of attaining that accent in its purity, is cautioned against putting too much faith in these indications.

[9] (p. 178). A free paraphrase. The office he held is unknown in America.

[10] (p. 201). "Clocher, clocher, come or I die." The translator finds this verse too much for him. Clocher is probably a proper name, but it also means a bell-tower or steeple, and perhaps the line has some implications correspondent to those of the story of Mahomet and the mountain.

[11] (p. 210). There seems to be no English equivalent for this, but it is too good to be lost.

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